

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
CLEVERNESS

Vol. VI

JANUARY, 1902

No. 1

CONTENTS

Prince Reckless	Arthur Grissom	1
Le Masque de l'Amour	Guy Wetmore Carryl	25
One Eighteenth-Century Day	Alfred Henry Lewis	27
On Tyburn Hill	McCrea Pickering	44
Sinful Sara	Elizabeth Duer	45
A Yule Song	Clinton Scollard	55
Under Difficulties	Arthur Crawford	56
The Enchanted Rug	Edgar Saltus	57
Salaam: New Year's	C. E. Johnstone	62
Giovanni	Frederick Chester	63
At Phædra's Tomb	Bliss Carman	67
The Hatred of Friends	Gertrude F. Lynch	69
Ballade à la Mode	William Griffith	79
Hail, Folly!	Frank Roe Batchelder	80
Purely Circumstantial	John Winwood	81
As Pass Strange Ships	Susie M. Best	83
Awaited	Charles Hanson Towne	84
A Woman of the East	Charlotte Becker	84
Object, Matrimony	A. S. Duane	85
Literature	William Wallace Whitelock	91
To My Enemy	L. M. Montgomery	92
What M. Maurice Pelot Says	John Regnault Ellyson	93
Pretty Louise	John Onslow	98
Modern Fox-Hunting	George F. Underhill	99
Rebellion	Julien Gordon	104
A Sentimental Journey, 1902	Francis M. Livingston	105
The Lotos and the Bottle	O. Henry	111
To a Violin	Katherine La Farge Norton	116
"Ties of Auld Lang Syne"	Ethel Watts Mumford	117
The Accounting	Florence Brooks	120
The Secret Panel	Countess Loveau de Chavanne	121
Expert Assistance	W. Pett Ridge	125
George Brenton, Artist	Alice Dunbar	129
Le Jeu et l'Amour	J. H. Rosny	135
The Curing of Mrs. Munroe	Havelock Eitrick	139
Faithful	Etta Wallace Miller	146
The Third Felicia	Olivia Howard Dunbar	147
An Unconventional Experiment	E. P. Neville	155
Conjugal Cross-Examination	Landis Ayr	159

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$3.00

SINGLE COPIES 25 CENTS

The entire contents of this magazine are protected by copyright, and must not be reprinted

Entered at New York Post-Office as second-class mail matter

Issued Monthly by Ess Ess Publishing Company, 1135 Broadway, New York

Copyright 1901 by
ESS ESS PUBLISHING COMPANY

WILLIAM GREEN, Printer, New York

PRINCE RECKLESS

By Arthur Grissom

PERHAPS I do wrong to reveal to the world, even at this late day, a secret that intimately concerns my betters, no less than one of the most powerful reigning families of Europe. Garrulous and indiscreet I may be; yet I feel that my part in that adventurous affair of the Prince which resulted in so much grief to some and so much happiness to others, entitles me to set forth the facts fully in my own justification. All the more since it will not be necessary to be so specific of identities and places as to cause any embarrassment to those who, notwithstanding all that has happened and the misjudgment that has been visited on me, still have my greatest love and respect.

For honor may be as dear to a servitor as to a prince; and if the telling of what I tell be disloyalty, then, even so, less shame to me, say I, than the dishonor of that graver charge under which I have rested all these years.

The Prince was barely five years old when his Majesty the King gave me over to him as his personal attendant. I was the son of one of his Majesty's stewards, who had served all his life in the Royal household. Being no more than ten years older than the Prince, he found me a good playfellow, and for a number of years, even after he began to realize his position as heir to the throne, our relation was more that of friend and companion than merely of Prince and equerry. It was I who taught him his letters, anticipating his tutors; and from the first I protest that I loved

him with a love that amounted to reverence, with no thought or presumption other than to serve him to the height of my capability.

All may not have found him lovable, but I knew him to be brave and generous, if hot-headed and rash; and when the time came that he struck me a blow in rage, he was sorry for the wrong, and said so, and made amends, so that afterward I thought rather the more of him than the less. Hence my sorrow is all the greater that when I raised my hand against him, who was my liege lord and master, I was denied all opportunity to earn his forgiveness.

Until he was nigh twenty my young gentleman knew little of the world; but at that time his natural wildness asserted itself, and breaking the bonds of restraint, he sought diversion wherever it might be found.

This displeased the King mightily. Not that his Majesty was himself a saint, and had never trespassed in his youth; but as it often happens that he who has the most faults requires the greatest virtue in others, so the King was most intolerant of those escapades of the Prince of which he himself had been guilty, and concerning which my father had told me in moments of confidence.

As the Prince's constant attendant, I did all in my power to shield his mad acts from publicity and the knowledge of the King; and more than once when he had drunk wine too freely, and was in the mood for any folly that presented itself, I saved him either by persuasion or strategy from doing those things that

Jan. 1902

154055

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would have scandalized the Court and provoked the wrath of his august father. "Prince Reckless" he was nicknamed in those days.

It was when he was thus in the full career of his dissipation that he met the young woman who was destined to be the cause of his supreme folly.

She was an American, an orphan, and of wealth and name. Through the influence of the minister from her country, she was presented at one of the receptions at the palace, and thereupon attracted great attention by reason of her grace and beauty. She was so sweet of manner, so gracious, so different from what our ideas had hitherto been of American women, so charming in all ways, that the wonder of admiration with which I first beheld her remains with me to this day.

With a relative, a little old lady whose heart was set on making her a great singer, she had taken a house in a quiet street, and lived quietly. And there the Prince visited her, not once only, but, as it came about, too often for the good of all concerned.

At first I thought little of the matter, deeming the interest of his Highness but a passing fancy, and was inclined to be pleased that he should find entertainment thus, rather than in amusements of another character. But as time went by and a great change came over him, I began to see to what the matter was leading, and viewed his devotion with rising alarm. For it is not permitted of the heir to a throne to think seriously of any woman save the one of royal rank who, for reasons of state, is chosen to be his wife. From what I had seen of Milady—I not only accompanied the Prince on his visits, but carried many small letters back and forth—I foresaw that, however much she loved him in return, their love could come to naught save misery to both; for whatever her heart might dictate, she was too proud even to consider a morganatic marriage, much less any other alliance.

There was no doubting the anger of the King should the story of so serious an affair reach his ears, and with the object of keeping all knowledge of it from him, as well as from the gossips of the Court, the Prince exercised the utmost caution in going to and from the house, dispensing with a private vehicle, and more often than otherwise walking cloaked through the darkness, the distance from the palace not being great.

Despite this discretion, I sometimes fancied that we were followed; and at last one night the evidence of this was so plain that the Prince, with all his abstraction, noticed it, and drew up sharply.

"There is a spy at our heels," he declared, in a low tone. "Listen."

"He has stopped," I answered.

"I will have a sight of the cur," he said, turning about.

"Let us make sure, your Highness," I suggested. "We might walk faster a little way, and note if he imitates us."

"So we will," he answered, leading on rapidly.

Being keenly on the alert, we had small difficulty in discerning that the man behind us increased his pace to correspond with our own.

We were now nearing Milady's house, and the street at that point chanced to be almost deserted.

We passed a lamp, and when, glancing back, the Prince saw the dark figure of the spy within the radius of the light, he wheeled and swiftly retraced his steps.

The action apparently disconcerted the other for an instant. He halted, as if about to turn on his heel, too; then, thinking he might better avert suspicion, if suspected he was, by continuing on, he advanced to meet the Prince, drawing his hat far forward over his eyes, and raising his cloak, with a movement of assumed carelessness, to cover his face.

I followed close after my master. He stopped when he confronted the pursuer, who stepped aside to pass by; whereupon the Prince, with a sudden movement, seized the protect-

ing cloak and threw it back, thus discovering to the light the countenance of its astonished owner.

"Ah, Count!" exclaimed the Prince, with scorn and anger in his tone, "is it your occupation now to slink through the streets with a cloak over your face?"

There was a long-standing enmity between the Prince and Count Voeglin, which was at all times but poorly concealed under a thin veneer of civility. It originated, I believe, in nothing more than an instinctive distrust, but the little flame of antipathy had been fanned by so many slighting allusions and contemptuous glances that it had long threatened to blaze into open hatred. The youthful Prince was not a good politician, and was as frank in his dislikes as in his likes. Of late, the circumstance of the two bestowing their affections in the same quarter was anything but encouraging of more amicable relations.

The Count, after the first surprise of discovery, quickly regained his self-possession. He was a somewhat larger man than my master, and as old as I, with eyes that were like gray steel, and a mouth that in moments of excitement twitched unpleasantly.

"As to the occupation to which you refer," he said, looking straight into the face of the Prince, "I believe I have no advantage over your Royal Highness."

The Prince drew himself erect, and for a moment glared fiercely at his enemy.

I expected what followed and took a step forward. But I was too late to interfere. His Highness lifted his arm and struck the Count full in the face with his fist, accompanying the blow with an epithet.

Voeglin staggered, but recovered himself.

"I regret," he said, with a slight bow, "that it is not permitted of a subject to return in kind the insults of his future sovereign."

The Prince, without deigning a reply, coolly turned his back and continued his way, while his ad-

versary retreated in the opposite direction.

The incident had occupied scarcely a minute; but a minute is sometimes long enough to make or mar a destiny.

Milady always greeted us with pretty courtesies and smiles, but of late I had noticed a shade of sadness in her expression, and this night it seemed to me her melancholy was more pronounced than usual. She had not abandoned her ideas of American freedom, and often she sat talking alone with the Prince, while I entertained myself with a book in a neighboring room, where their voices reached me only in an indistinguishable murmur.

On this occasion it was much later than usual when my master summoned me, and he was very pale. As he bent over her hand in farewell I distinctly saw a tear roll down his cheek and plash on the wristband of her gown, while a furtive glance at her eyes showed me that she had been weeping.

On the way back to the palace the Prince never spoke. That night he did not sleep, but paced his chamber incessantly till dawn, when he called me to order the horses, and we rode furiously most of the day. Not until we were both faint for the want of food and drink, and our animals were on their last legs, did he draw rein and consent to enter a tavern.

The following day it was the same experience; I continuing steadfastly at his heels whithersoever he turned in his aimless wanderings, more concerned than I can say about how it would all end, and pitying him with all my heart.

He had forgotten his engagements, his responsibilities and duties, all those social ceremonies at which his presence was almost obligatory. He thought of nothing but his love and the fate that denied him happiness.

In the evening, when the round moon shouldered up through the trees, he walked in solitude in the garden. When at last I approached him he paused, and seemed on the

point of addressing me harshly, perhaps to send me away; then, on second thought, he came toward me and sat down on a bench, motioning me to a seat beside him.

For some moments he sat silent with his haggard face in his hands; then suddenly he raised his eyes to mine with a look almost pathetic.

"After all, you're about the best friend I have, Adolph," he said. "You've never betrayed me yet, and I can't say as much for some of those above you. There are times when even a prince wants a friend—a friend that he can trust. A prince?—faugh! I would rather, before heaven, be the poorest peasant of this kingdom!"

"Your position is the envy of every man, your Highness," I returned, as if failing to catch his drift.

"Enough of 'your Highness;' I'm sick of it!" he answered, savagely. "Adolph," he went on, "I love her—you know whom I mean. She's more to me than all the rest of the world—the throne—everything. I believe I shall go mad if I lose her. She loves me, too, I know that. But she has said that I must not see her again, for both my sake and hers. . . . Yes, she said just that. . . . Now what am I to do? You are older than I, Adolph; tell me what to do. I must do something. By the Lord! am I to have the gates of heaven shut in my face without lifting a hand?"

I was deeply moved and perturbed. I had foreseen that this very thing would come to pass, but now that it was come I knew not how to deal with it. He needed good counsel now if ever; but I had none to give save to abide by the inevitable—and that was not such as he desired.

"It is a difficult matter," I finally replied, hesitatingly; "difficult . . . and unfortunate."

"Yes, unfortunate," he agreed, sighing. "If she were like the others— But I have never been base enough to insult her even in thought. She is pure and noble, Adolph. She is the one woman who has ever appealed to my better nature,

lifted me up and made me ashamed of all that was wrong in my life. You have seen how her influence has changed me?—you have noticed, have you not? I was fast losing my respect for women when I met her; I was fast losing respect for myself. I had no idea of what love is; but now I know, and I know what it means to a man, how essential it is to my life. And because I am Crown Prince I am to turn my back on love and happiness, and marry whomsoever I am told to marry, to strengthen some international political alliance. That is a fine thing for a prince to do, it may be, but I happen to be more man than prince, and my soul revolts at the thing."

"Perhaps, in time," I suggested, "if you do not see her again——"

"No," he interrupted. "If I thought I could forget her I would journey to the antipodes; but I can never forget her. Perhaps I am a fool—that as it may be; but I love her, and I want her and no other for my wife."

"Your wife?" I ejaculated. "What about Princess Margaret of Waldburg? You must know what the King intends; it is already talked of everywhere."

"Yes, I know," he said, impatiently. "Three days ago the King informed me of his plans. It is all arranged, I believe. I am to send a proposal at once. I don't know what I said. There was a row. The Princess Margaret is as homely as a Swedish peasant, and as stupid, too, I've no doubt. I would rather marry the woman I love and live in a hut."

"Have you asked her to marry you?" I ventured to ask.

He rose to his feet and walked away from me for a dozen paces, then came back.

"No," he answered. "There is no use. I know she will not, because I could not acknowledge her to the world. Sooner would she marry that scoundrel Voeglin; he at least could give her an honest position." He thrashed the phlox at his feet viciously with the cane he carried. "It was

that encounter the other night that decided her—that and the talk about the Waldburg girl. She was alarmed lest trouble follow on the discovery of our meetings, and so, everything considered, she said, it was best that we should part at once, and forget. But I cannot forget.”

He stood silent for a time, and then resumed, in a calmer tone:

“I promised not to visit her again, but I did not promise not to write. I will ask her, Adolph; it is the only hope. Perhaps, if she suffers as I do, she will consent. God knows it is a bitter thing; but it is the only hope. I will plead and reason with her, Adolph; and you shall bear the letter, at once—to-night. Wait here till I return.”

He strode swiftly up the wide walk and disappeared into the palace. I waited with patience, meditating. I felt that he was but clutching at a straw, yet now that his course was determined it was useless to try to turn him from it. I was both sorry and glad; sorry for the man, glad for the prince. Most of all, I wished the affair well done with.

At last he reappeared, bringing the letter.

“Deliver this into no hands but hers,” he said with emotion. “Bring me her answer as quickly as possible.”

I was by no means heavy of foot, and was soon beyond the gates and hurrying through the streets.

In fifteen minutes I had reached Milady’s house.

A cabriolet, without a coat-of-arms, was before the door. At first, in the uncertain light, I failed to recognize it, but turning for a second inspection when half-way up the steps, recognition came like a flash.

At that moment the door opened, emitting a flood of light that fell full on my face, and a gray-bearded man of commanding figure came out.

Instinctively I drew back and saluted.

It was the King!

He paused, and seemed to penetrate me with his glance.

“What are you doing here?” he inquired, sternly.

For an instant I lost my speech.

“Sire,” I said at last, with what dignity I could muster, “I am the servant of the Prince.”

He extended his hand imperiously.

“Give me the letter!” he commanded.

I hesitated, trembling. The door still remained open, and beyond it I caught a glimpse of Milady’s face, pale and anxious. Then a mist seemed to gather before my eyes.

“Give me the letter!” repeated the King, in a menacing tone, “and then begone to your worthless master!”

I took the letter from my pocket and placed it in his Majesty’s hand; and then I went blindly down the steps and back to the palace.

II

THE Prince was waiting my return in his apartments.

As I entered he advanced to meet me, his manner expressive at once of eagerness, doubt and surprise.

“You are back too soon to have brought me what I want,” he said. “Did you see her? Did you deliver the letter?”

“I saw her,” I answered, half choking over the words, “and I delivered the letter——”

“Well?” he cried, suspiciously, as I hesitated. My manner plainly betrayed the fact that my mission had been ill-fated.

“But not to her,” I added.

“To whom?”

Two bright red spots were burning in his pale cheeks.

“To the King.”

He gazed at me in blank amazement.

“You delivered my letter to the King?” he exclaimed.

“He came out of the door as I went up the steps, your Highness,” I explained. “He divined at once what my mission there was, and demanded the letter. I gave it to him. What else could I do?”

An impulse of rage seized the Prince. He grasped my throat and shook me, and gave me a severe blow on the mouth.

"You traitor!" he hissed. "You, too, are against me, and take the first chance to betray me! I've a mind to have your life!"

I was stronger than he, but no thought of resistance entered my head, if for no other reason than that, overpowered by a sense of guilt and shame, I felt I deserved his denunciation and his blows. Finally he flung me against the wall and dropped into a chair.

I stood silent, waiting for him to speak.

He fell to thinking, his anger gradually subsiding.

"What could the King have been doing there?" he inquired, after some moments. "You did not see her?—she did not say?"

"I saw her only through the open door," I replied. "The King stood between us, and when he received the letter he commanded me to go. But the object of his visit may be easily guessed."

"To find out everything, of course."

"Yes. He had been told of what was going on, and went there to investigate for himself."

"This is Voeglin's work," said the Prince, with conviction. "It was to be expected the dastard would have his revenge."

"My arrival at the house could not have been more untimely," I went on. "There was no retreating—no opportunity for subterfuge, when I met his Majesty face to face at the door. But I was to blame. I should have known the carriage, though it was one without the Royal arms. As it was, I ran my head straight into the danger."

"Surely matters are getting desperate when a king must resort to intercepting letters," said the Prince, bitterly. "An elevating spectacle, truly. And that letter, of all others! There will be absolutely nothing to conceal after he has read that. May the reading of it give him pleasure!"

He was pacing the floor again, his face drawn with anger and anxiety. However, his indignation was directed more at his father now than at me.

"There'll be an explosion, you can depend on it," he continued, "and it won't be long coming. Meantime there's nothing to do but wait and see what happens."

Presently he paused in front of me and laid his hand on my arm.

"I was too hasty a while ago, Adolph," he said, apologetically. "I understand the affair better now. I do not blame you. There was nothing you could do but deliver the letter when the King commanded. I think I struck you, didn't I? It was the first time, eh, Adolph?"

"Yes, your Highness," I answered, in a low voice.

"Well, it shall be the last," he said, kindly. "I know you are attached to me, and that you are loyal. I shall not forget this again. Someone is at the door."

We both knew instinctively what the interruption meant. In response to the knock I opened the door, and one of the King's gentlemen entered. His Majesty requested the immediate presence of his Royal Highness in the private audience room.

The Prince smiled coldly.

"I told you we should not long be kept in suspense," he said. "Come with me!"

I followed him along the corridor and down a short flight of steps to the further end of the palace, thence through an antechamber and into the splendid apartment known as the private audience room, which was also the library.

The King was alone, and sat facing the entrance beside a large malachite table, on which were a number of newspapers and a lamp.

I paused on the threshold, while the Prince advanced unhesitatingly to the centre of the room.

"You summoned me, sire; I am here," he said, bowing slightly.

The King met his glance with a scowl.

"Three days ago," began his Maj-

esty, in a harsh tone, "I was at a loss to understand your obstinate and foolish opposition to the marriage I proposed for you with Margaret of Waldburg. Since then I have been fully enlightened. I might have guessed that you had mixed yourself up in some discreditable affair with another woman."

The Prince stood erect with folded arms, and waited for him to continue.

"It was not necessary for me to read the pitiful and silly letter that has just fallen into my hands to comprehend that you contemplated some such rashness as a marriage against my wishes—a secret *mésalliance*. I had seen and heard enough without that shameful document to explain your woebegone appearance and neglect of your duties. Not satisfied with scandalous intrigues, you must recklessly involve yourself and this Court in a far more serious and disgraceful affair, without a thought of the dignity or responsibilities of your position. That, too, at a time when a union with one of your own rank is of the utmost importance to the state—when the future of this kingdom may to a large extent depend on the alliance with the House of Waldburg. I think you must have gone mad. I cannot say I am surprised at the discoveries I have made; I know you too well to be surprised at anything you may do. But there is reason to be thankful that I have learned of this crowning folly before it is too late to prevent its consummation."

Still the Prince made no answer. From his attitude and expression it was impossible to judge what effect the words of the irate King had made on him.

The monarch rose to his feet and stood for a moment in wrathful contemplation of the wayward heir to the throne. Then he resumed:

"Within a fortnight I shall despatch an envoy to arrange, if possible, your marriage with the Princess Margaret. If her mother, the Queen, does not oppose the union—and I have reason to believe she will not—it will

then be your duty to send a formal proposal to your future wife. It is desirable that the marriage should take place without any unnecessary delay. Meantime, while the affair is being arranged, you will free yourself absolutely from your present entanglements. I command you to take the first express train to-morrow for Seaport, with not more than two attendants, and report yourself to Admiral Coventry; his squadron departs for a two months' cruise the following morning, and you will accompany him on his flagship. I command you to make no further attempt to see the American woman, or to communicate with her in any way. You may now retire. Should you fail to obey these commands in any particular you will meet with the extremity of my displeasure."

The Prince saluted, and without speaking, withdrew from the apartment and led the way back to his own chambers.

There he sat meditating dismally for a time, addressing me only to request a drink of brandy.

Had his thoughts been uttered aloud by a citizen in the market place I am inclined to believe the unfortunate would have suffered a term in prison for *lèse-majesté*. But he restrained his tongue, appearing to feel the hopelessness, in the face of the King's decrees, of longer contending against the inevitable. It was apparent that he had not withstood the interview as well as his uncompromising demeanor had implied, and that for the nonce he was broken-spirited.

At last he rose to his feet, drank again of the brandy, and said, wearily:

"I am going to sleep. I am worn out. You will have my luggage ready. The King holds all the trumps, it seems."

He entered his bedchamber, and was soon soundly slumbering, for the first time in three days.

At nine o'clock the next morning we were on the way to the seaboard. Although he had been granted the privilege of a second attendant, he contented himself with my services

alone, and entrusted the conduct of his journey entirely to me. Throughout the trip he preserved a moody silence and a sullen indifference to everything that went on round him.

We arrived at the port where a number of his Majesty's men-of-war lay at anchor about the middle of the afternoon. Instead of going at once on board the flagship, or of sending word of his arrival, the Prince repaired to a hotel where he was unrecognized, and shut himself in his room with a bottle of wine.

At nine o'clock he dined, and at twelve retired to bed, somewhat under the influence, it must be confessed, of his liberal potations.

When he consented to rise the following morning the naval vessels had one and all weighed anchor and departed on their cruise.

The King, apparently, had omitted to have the admiral notified of the Prince's coming, and so the flagship had steamed away without him.

The Prince showed first surprise and then pleasure at what he termed his "escape from two months' imprisonment." Doubtless he had carefully considered various methods of evading his sentence, without determining on any definite course of action; and now that the problem had been resolved by circumstances, without the necessity of deliberate strategy on his part, he regarded himself as greatly favored of fortune.

"Adolph," he said, a few hours later, "we will go back. I will see her in spite of Satan himself! The King will believe me to be at sea for the next two months, and meantime I shall not undeceive him. We must have disguises. Go to some small shop at once and make the necessary purchases. Buy common, coarse clothes. I should have a false beard, eh? See to it that every precaution is taken to avoid recognition. We will take a train that will put us at the capital after nightfall."

I obeyed his instructions implicitly, and within a short time both of us had undergone a metamorphosis that

we believed insured us immunity from discovery.

While these preparations for our secret venture were making, the spirits of his Highness improved perceptibly. Fears of possible consequences did not trouble him. There was too much of the daredevil in his composition for him to hesitate at any risk, and the gratifying anticipations of the end to be attained outweighed all considerations of personal responsibility.

He laughed aloud when he noted his changed appearance in a mirror, and jested with me over my loss of dignity in my misfit tweeds.

In the early afternoon we departed, and at nine o'clock that night, having passed unnoticed through crowds at the station and in the streets, we stood before Milady's house.

We advanced with a certain caution, induced by former experiences, but there was no spy at our heels and no carriage at the door. On the contrary, there was absolutely no sign of life about the place. No lights were visible anywhere in the house.

The Prince rang the bell eagerly. There was no response. He rang again, louder and longer than before. At last a slim light flickered in the hall, and the door was opened by an old caretaker.

"Where is your mistress?" the Prince asked, abruptly.

"She has left, sir," was the woman's reply.

"Left! What do you mean?" he exclaimed.

"I mean she has gone away, sir, with her aunt. She went last night."

"When is she coming back?"

"She is not coming back, sir. They have gone for good. They left very hasty, sir."

The Prince was astounded and chagrined.

"Not coming back!" he repeated. "They have given up the house?"

"Yes, sir. I don't understand just how it was. I think it was very unexpected."

"Where have they gone?"

"That I cannot answer. I was not told, sir."

The Prince said something under his breath.

"Doesn't anybody know? Ask the other servants!" he insisted.

"There is none here, sir. The maids went with them, and the others are all discharged, with full purses, though, thanks to her ladyship."

"At what hour did they leave last night?"

"That I do know, sir. It was for the six o'clock train. It had just fallen dark."

"Here's thanking you for your information," said the Prince, crossing the old woman's palm with a coin and turning away. "By heaven! here's a state of things!" he muttered, as he went down the steps. "What is the six o'clock train, Adolph?"

"A Seaport express," I answered.

"I thought so. We have been running away from her for the last six hours. What can her departure mean?"

"The King—" I began.

"Undoubtedly," he interrupted, "the King. A hint would have been enough for her. Perhaps, even, his wishes accorded with her own impulse, seeing what trouble threatened. But I am not to be left behind. Back we go to Seaport. I will follow her till I find her. After all, it is just as well that the scene should change from this place for the next two months."

There was no train before midnight, and we employed the intervening time in dining privately at a second-class restaurant, like companions and friends of the middle class.

The Prince beguiled his impatience by talking of the young woman he loved, speculating on her probable destination, the chances of overtaking her at Seaport, her surprise at seeing him when she doubtless believed him at sea, and the possibilities for happiness the next few weeks contained. As for me, I kept my thoughts to myself, since my counsel was not asked and I was not

forgetful that I was only the servant of the Prince, not his keeper.

We arrived early at the Seaport hotel that we had before patronized, and after a hasty breakfast undertook to discover Milady's whereabouts. Two hotels were visited unsuccessfully; at the third we were informed that the fair American and her party had spent a night and a day there, and had then gone aboard a transatlantic liner that was to sail that morning for New York.

In a fever of anxiety the Prince commanded the cabman to drive us at top speed to the steamship pier.

But we were too late.

The vessel had sailed two hours before.

Investigation proved the truth of our information regarding their destination; their names appeared on the sailing list, and they had been observed aboard ship.

I cannot say that I was surprised at this dénouement; I had suspected that Milady might be on her way home. But if the thought had occurred to the Prince he had put it out of his mind as a calamity so foreign to his hopes as to partake of the improbable. For a little time his disappointment was painful to witness. Words were inadequate to express his feelings, and he stood silent in impotent exasperation.

"Adolph," he said at last, fiercely, "I said I shall follow her till I find her, and I shall. We will go to New York!"

Inquiry revealed that there would not be another passenger vessel sailing until three days later.

On the way back to the hotel scarcely a word was said, and all the rest of the day the Prince appeared to be occupied with some deep plan.

Late that night he bade me accompany him, and we were driven to a fashionable club where his Highness, on at least one occasion, had been a guest of honor.

I was sent up to ascertain if a certain well-known nobleman was there, and if so, if a friend could have a private word with him.

The nobleman was there, the visitor was received, and the two retired to a private room.

More than an hour elapsed before the Prince came forth. Precisely what was said at that interview I have no means of knowing, but there is reason to believe that his Highness revealed his identity to his friend, and, to a considerable extent, took him into his confidence.

The next day found us aboard a magnificent steam yacht that I knew to be the property of the nobleman.

The captain and crew had evidently received their instructions, and everything was in readiness for a voyage.

I must have looked my surprise. "Westward ho!" laughed the Prince, as the yacht got under way and headed for the open sea.

Thus began that reckless and adventurous trip of his Royal Highness, in defiance of all conventions and the explicit commands of his father, the King.

III

WE arrived in New York harbor during the afternoon of a clear Spring day, after a quick and uneventful voyage.

The Prince was radiantly happy at the prospect of seeing the object of his long pursuit, and we landed without waste of time, proceeding to a hotel of comfortable appointments but of inconspicuous character. The Prince had discarded his disguise on boarding the yacht, and deemed it unnecessary in a country where he was personally unknown. He desired, however, to preserve his incognito and avoid all publicity, and hence was careful to betray no semblance of royal ostentation.

Had he been recognized, it is easy to imagine what a sensation the American newspapers would have made of his presence and his mission.

Milady's house, which overlooked the great Park, was readily located

by reference to a blue book, and it was still early in the evening when we were admitted to her drawing-room.

The Prince was announced by his assumed name, and it was not until Milady, in some perplexity as to who her visitor might be, came softly into his presence that the truth was even suspected.

I shall never forget the look of happiness that shone on my master's face at the moment of that meeting, nor the surprise, the tenderness and the joy of Milady as her gaze rested on him.

At first she grew very pale, and appeared to doubt her senses.

"You?" she said, almost in a whisper.

"I," he answered, holding out his arms.

For an instant she hesitated, while her look of astonishment melted into one of ineffable love, and then impulsively she advanced and was caught to his breast in a long embrace, silent but for one half-choking sob as her head fell on his shoulder.

However much I had deplored this clandestine affair of the Prince, now all my prejudice was for the moment swept away, and the scene affected me almost to tears. For I will confess that I had learned to admire Milady no less than I admired my master, and it was impossible to be a witness of their love and fail of sympathy. A servant of royalty is not so accustomed to scenes of real affection that he may view them with absolute indifference if he be a man with a heart in him.

Milady was worthy in all respects of the honest devotion of the future King, save only that chance had not made her a Waldburg; and as I beheld her now, trembling with emotion, fairer in her garb of simple white than I had ever before seen her, I could not but feel that were I the Prince I would have dared all to see her as he had done.

Finally she released herself from his arms and drew back, but he

caught her hands and held her, and thus they stood and gazed at each other with misty eyes.

"I would have followed you till I found you, if it had been round the world," he said. "Are you glad I am come?"

"I am glad," she answered.

"You are surprised? You did not expect to see me again?"

"More than the ocean was between us. I cannot understand how it is possible for you to be here."

"Enough for the present that I am here," he smiled. "And you will not send me away again? You will not cast me into outer darkness?"

"As for that, it is I who am cast into outer darkness," she murmured. She drew her hands away, and her glance rested on me. "Adolph," she continued, coming toward me, smiling like the angel that she was, "next to his Royal Highness, you are welcome."

She extended her hand to me, and I dared lift it humbly to my lips.

"Your servant, and his, always, Milady," I said, reverently.

Directly behind me portières opened into another and smaller room, and thither I retreated. There my view of them was limited to a space where the curtains parted, but I was not beyond hearing, and all that was said during the visit came plainly to my ears.

"You see now," said the Prince, when they were seated near together, "that it is not so easy to escape from me as you thought."

"You have broken your promise," she replied; "you said that you would not try to see me again."

He laughed boyishly.

"I believe I did make such a promise as that; but how could you expect me to keep it?"

"It was for the best," she answered, gravely. "Especially after—after what happened."

"You mean after the King was told?"

"Yes. He was very angry when he came to see me that day."

"Angry with you?"

"I don't know. Doubtless. But mostly with you."

"H'm! I heard from him. What did he ask you?"

"Everything."

"And you told him——?"

"The truth."

"Did he say you must leave the country?"

"Not that exactly. I stated that I meant to do so, and he said I could please him that way very much." She laughed a little. "He was kind enough to intimate, also, that the sooner I left the better he would be pleased."

"And so, without waiting for a word from me, you ran away home? I am afraid the King has not found me so obedient to his wishes as you."

"Certainly you are not here with his permission?"

"By no means. The letter that he intercepted at your door did not soften his feelings, you may be sure, and that night he bundled me off for a two months' cruise on a man-o'-war. He thinks I'm studying naval tactics at this minute. But I managed to escape my banishment, and followed after you."

He did not particularize as to the manner in which the escape was effected.

There was a moment's silence, and then the girl said:

"How much you risk to gain so little!"

"I am already paid for my coming a thousand times over," he answered. "I have lived only in the hope of seeing you. All other considerations are as nothing compared to the joy of this hour."

"I am happy, too," she said, softly. "I never expected to see you again. I have been very miserable since—since that last night."

"Words cannot tell how I have suffered," he returned. "Oh, my dear, we must not be parted again!"

"Not parted again?" she said, dreamily. "Alas, you forget!"

"I forget nothing!" he exclaimed, passionately. "You see that I cannot live away from you!"

"You forget the King—the throne—the Princess Margaret. Could barriers be more insurmountable? You have come across the sea to me, and to-night we are happy, yes; but to-morrow—ah, to-morrow will bring the reality again, and our pain will be all the greater for the happiness to-night!"

"For God's sake, do not speak of my leaving you!" he cried, rising to his feet and standing before her. "When I promised, that last night, not to see you again, I gave my word in good faith—I thought that I could keep it—that I could conquer my love for you and put you out of my life; and I tried—I said, with you, 'It is for the best,' 'It is the only way,' and I meant to face fate boldly, and forget—yes, forget; but I could not forget. I had tasted of a cup that cannot be put down at will. I was like a man dying of thirst who has been allowed but a mouthful of cooling drink. For two days and nights I suffered, and then I wrote to you, saying that I must see you again—saying more than that. It was the letter the King read. He sent me away; I went back in violation of his commands, and you were gone. I followed you—followed you across the sea—caring nothing for consequences if I could but find you again, and now when I have found you, oh, my love, you tell me that I must leave you!"

The pathos of his voice pierced the heart like a pain.

"It is not what I wish—you know that," faltered Milady; "it is the inevitable."

"No, no, not the inevitable," he answered, quickly. "There is one plan—one saving plan. Can you guess what was in that ill-fated letter? I asked you, for love's sake, to sacrifice your pride—to think only of the happiness of us both—to be my own best beloved always—to be my wife. This is the only way. I have dreamed of it all these nights and days. I have come for you—I will not go back without you. Listen: Down in the harbor is a beautiful

yacht, the one in which I crossed; it is mine so long as I want it; it is waiting for us now—it will carry us out of the world into Paradise; for a long six weeks to come I shall not be missed, and none will know our whereabouts; we will seek sunny seas and lands of flowers, and oh, my love, what joy we shall know! And then—then we will go boldly back to the King, and tell him all, and nothing but death shall ever separate us. I will never marry another—I will love only you. Look at me, my dear; say you will marry me and at once; say you will go with me and love me, and never part from me again!"

He seated himself beside her and caressed her hand pleadingly, his eyes eloquent, his handsome face flushed with his rapid speaking and excitement.

From where I sat I could not see her face, but I could imagine the play of emotion to which she gave expression as the bitter-sweet struggle went on within her mind and heart.

It was a hard struggle, a supreme test. The way of love is an alluring way, strewn with the poppy and the lotus; and the way of pride may be so cruelly forbidding!

I listened breathless for her reply. When at last it came her tone was very low and sad, and yet distinct:

"It cannot be. It is a dream—beautiful, but only a dream. I do not doubt your love, I do not doubt my own; but oh, there is so much besides. We should have to sacrifice too much; there would be misery and despair for both in the end."

"No," he urged, "we can make our own destinies; we can defy the devil."

She sighed hopelessly.

"You will be a king, but you will be a slave—a slave to Royal custom, to the duties and responsibilities of a nation's sovereign. Your love is not your own to bestow at will. There is no law that can make me your wife in the sight of the world, though I be your wife in fact. The world has its own name for such a union. Ah, my

Prince, it is piteous, but it is true. Such happiness is not for us. It is not what we would, but what we must."

His head sank on his breast, and one hand covered his eyes. Thus he sat, a picture of misery.

"Think what your decision means," he said; "lifelong despair or lifelong happiness. Why should we care what the vulgar world may say? To have lived and loved—that is the sum of life; all else is nothing."

"There is shame," she answered.

And from her position no words could move her. They talked on till the hour was grown late. All the arts of a lover's eloquence he employed, in vain; he entreated her by her love for him, by his love for her, by all the charms of their mutual love, but though she wept she would not yield. And finally he saw how useless was persuasion, and desisted.

They embraced in silence and in tears; and then we went away.

How soon thereafter the idea of the desperate act that followed took root in the Prince's brain I do not know; whether it was during the ride back to the hotel, or during the sleepless night, or not until the ominous encounter of the following day, there is no way of telling, for it was his wont to maintain an inscrutable reserve when he was formulating any plan of a doubtful character, whether from motives of secrecy or from scorn of counsel being a question.

There is little doubt, however, that the encounter had a direct bearing on the matter; for jealousy is the devil's own minister.

It was near the middle of the day, and we were walking aimlessly along the city's great thoroughfare of fashion, noting idly the crowds and vehicles. In his abstraction the Prince brushed against more than one individual hurrying in the opposite direction, and finally bumped squarely into a man who came suddenly out of a jeweler's doorway and across our path at right angles, with the purpose of entering a hansom waiting at the curb.

Both muttered an apology, glanced at each other, and drew back. Recognition must have been simultaneous; but while Count Voeglin started and stared, growing pale, the Prince, with no more change of countenance than if his enemy were a perfect stranger, stepped aside and walked on.

If the action had been a premeditated cut direct, his nonchalance could not have been greater; but while it showed admirable presence of mind, born of an instinctive desire to baffle identification, its futility must have been plain to him instantly. Even though he was not dressed in his ordinary fashion, and his presence in this part of the world was wholly unsuspected, the Count was too familiar with his features to be deceived for a second.

As we passed on, I glanced back furtively, and saw Voeglin still standing there, staring after us in amazement. I felt like turning about and annihilating him at a blow. It required no clairvoyance to comprehend that the meeting with him was unfortunate. He had played us ill before, and he was a distinct menace now. The thing we had most to fear was discovery; and it was beyond the bounds of probability to suppose that he would not use his knowledge in some manner to our disadvantage.

How came he to be in New York? No question could be easier to answer than that. No mystery clouded the matter. He had been inspired by the same motive as the Prince. He had followed Milady.

His Highness said nothing as we continued our way. The importance of this meeting with his enemy could not have been altogether lost on him; yet doubtless he was less concerned by the fact that we were again in his power, and that embarrassments even greater than before might result, than by the thought of the rivalry that threatened to end in his own defeat and the Count's triumph.

Night brought another of those mercurial changes in the Prince's spirits, a significant gaiety that indicated that his plans, whatever they

were, had been determined. We went again to visit Milady, but the distressing subject of the night before was not mentioned. When we departed the Prince announced that he meant to see something of the darker side of life in this wonderful American city, and ordered that we be driven to the slums. Midnight found us making the rounds of the garish, rough resorts in the lower quarters of the town.

I had not the faintest understanding of his sudden interest in the hideous mien of vice, but like the King, I had ceased to be surprised at anything he might do. To have expostulated would have availed nothing, so I contented myself with maintaining an unceasing vigilance over his person.

He led the way rapidly from place to place, evidently with the object of familiarizing himself in a general way with the disreputable locality. Low music halls, drinking dens and some veritable dives were visited, and such pictures of sodden and vicious humanity as they presented neither of us had ever before seen.

In front of one of the quieter places a coarse-visaged cabby sat drowsing on his box, and the Prince shook him by the arm to wake him.

"Come inside and have something to warm you up," said his Highness, cheerfully, and the fellow, by no means displeased by the invitation, got down with alacrity and followed us into the resort.

About a dozen rough characters, among them three or four sailors, were lounging either about the bar or over bare tables disposed round the room. Some were stupid with drink, others talked among themselves in raucous voices; none gave us any particular attention.

The three of us found seats at a table in a corner, and the Prince, ordering drinks, proceeded to cultivate his new acquaintance. The latter was nothing loath to be cultivated so long as his favorite beverage was forthcoming, and the promise, in addition, of regular pay for his time

removed the last trace of his reserve.

He was a husky ruffian, who looked as if in all his thirty-five years he had not been seriously troubled with a conscience. Time had dealt heavily with him and accentuated the naturally hard lines of his face. The habit of drink showed itself in purple puffs beneath his eyes; but the eyes themselves were still keen—dangerously keen.

The spectacle of the Prince in friendly communion with such an individual, in such surroundings, was indeed a strange one. It was easy to imagine what the King would say if he were to witness it.

The conversation continued until the resort closed for the night. Then the man was paid, and agreed to an appointment at the same place the following night. A car took us back to the hotel.

For a week our evenings were divided thus between the mansion of Milady and the saloon in the slums. The society of the cabby appeared to have an increasing fascination, and presently a second acquaintance of his kind was made in the person of one of his friends, a younger man, whose employment, if he had any, was not made known. He wore his hat tilted over his eyes, and drank mixed ale with great avidity, speaking seldom, and then in such queer phrases he was difficult to understand.

One night the Prince struck a bargain with these worthies. He required their assistance, he said, in a small matter that it would be worth their while not to mention to others. Could he depend on them? He could. Would they drive the closed cab to a certain street and number at eight o'clock the following evening, and there quietly wait his orders? They would. That was all. They should be well paid. The glasses were refilled, and the compact was sealed.

The next morning, obeying instructions, I returned the Prince's luggage to the yacht, which was tied

up at one of the piers in the East River. I also carried a letter to the captain.

When darkness fell we were driven to Milady's house. It was the number his Highness had given to the cabby of the slums. It was yet early—about 7.30. Our own cab was dismissed on our arrival.

Still the Prince communicated to me nothing of his plans. Either he mistrusted that I should counsel against them, or else he counted on my loyal coöperation as a matter of course. In either case he was satisfied to act first and talk afterward. If I had a suspicion, it was of a character that I could not bring myself to entertain.

Milady came down presently in street attire. A certain famous painting, of which the world was talking, had recently been purchased by one of her friends who lived but a few doors away, and she was to take the Prince to see it. Her promise had seemed to please him greatly, though I had not before known him to be much interested in paintings.

They always had many confidences to exchange, and for some time they sat talking with animation. Twice the Prince rose restlessly and walked to the window overlooking the street. Milady leisurely buttoned her gloves.

"Shall we go?" he said at last. "Voeglin has been very considerate thus far; but he may choose to avail himself to-night of his permission to call, and—well, you will not be at home."

"I shall not be sorry," she smiled, and they passed into the hall.

I followed them. The hall opened into a wide vestibule, which in turn opened on the street. No servant was in regular attendance here, save only to answer the bell, and it fell to me to close the hall door as we went out. As I did so, the Prince seized Milady's wrists, thrust a handkerchief into her mouth and lifted her in his arms.

"Open the street door, quick!" he commanded me, in a low voice.

For the space of a second I had stood in motionless consternation. Now two or three long strides took me across the vestibule; but instead of opening the door I placed my back against it.

"This is madness itself!" I exclaimed. "What do you mean to do?"

"I mean to take her aboard the yacht," he answered, looking at me defiantly. "Open the door. There is no time for questions."

"If she will not go of her own will, then she shall not go at all," I said, firmly. "I will not open the door!"

Rage and indignation were rising within me. Milady turned her startled eyes to me, and I thought there was an appeal in the glance. She tried to struggle, but he held her so closely that the effort was vain.

"Do you refuse to obey?" demanded the Prince, his face growing pallid with anger. "Have you forgotten who you are?"

"Your servant, your Highness," I replied, "but not your tool in crime. It is you who have forgotten who you are."

"Look you, Adolph," he returned, in a conciliatory tone, "this is my affair, not yours. If I choose to risk everything on one desperate play it is nobody's concern but my own. Once it is done she will forgive it and make the best of it. We will be at sea by morning, and the whole thing will be explained as an elopement. You can name your own reward for aiding me. Open the door or stand aside. Every minute is precious!"

"This may be your affair, not mine," I replied, heatedly, "but it involves a woman's honor, and I will make it mine. This is a cowardly outrage against Milady, and I will not be a party to it, nor will I stand by and not defend her, though it cost me my head!"

"You villain!" he uttered, fiercely, moving toward me threateningly.

Instinctively I raised my hand in defense. Milady shuddered convulsively, then grew limp. She had fainted.

"So much the better!" he muttered, allowing her to sink against the wall to the floor. "Now, stand aside, damn you!"

He stepped close to me, as if to hurl himself against me.

A terrible anger took possession of me. My eyes became blurred. I leaned toward him and struck him a heavy blow.

He fell, strove to rise, and then lay quiet.

IV

FOR a moment I grew cold with a great revulsion of feeling, horrified at what I had done.

I had frustrated one crime, but in doing so had I not committed another that was greater? It is a terrible matter for a servant to strike his master, and that master his future king; and how inconceivably more terrible if the blow prove fatal!

The thought that I had killed the Prince sent all the blood from my heart; my senses swam and I staggered dizzily. I was a strong man, and in my passion I had struck with all my force. Many a time such a blow had been known to kill.

Whatever the result of my deed, however justifiable it may have been, in that one still moment as I steadied myself against the door, staring down at the prostrate figure at my feet, I felt the awful guilt of the murderer.

Then the spirit of action returned to me. I drew a deep breath that seemed to restore my strength, and kneeling over him, placed my head close against his breast, and listened. There was the faintest perceptible beat of the heart. It was enough. A thrill of joy ran through me. All my love for him surged back on me. I could have kissed his feet with the extravagant delight of a dog.

I realized now the importance of taking prompt measures to avoid discovery. At any instant a visitor might arrive, and discovery meant scandal. To get the Prince out of the house and restore Milady to con-

sciousness—these were my first duties.

Quietly I opened the front door and stole swiftly down the steps. At the curb below stood a cab, and on the pavement beside it two figures that even in the darkness I had no difficulty in recognizing.

The knaves were on the alert, and seeing me motion to them, followed me up the stoop.

"The Prince has suffered a sudden illness," I explained in my agitation, at the door. "You are to carry him down carefully to the cab, and then wait for me."

With that I admitted them to the vestibule, admonishing silence.

Luckily the noise of the affair had attracted none of the servants of the house, and the way was still clear.

With a suspicious glance at Milady, the two lifted my master between them and carried him quickly forth, while I cautioned them in a whisper to be careful to avoid observation, and to place him in an easy position in the vehicle.

Then gathering up Milady in my arms, I bore her tenderly into the drawing-room and disposed her upon a *fauteuil*. As I did so the color came back to her face, and she opened her eyes.

I stepped back respectfully, and she sat up, looking first about the room, then at me.

"What is it?" she said, doubtfully. "What has happened? Where is—he?"

"They have taken him from the house," I answered. "It was all very unfortunate. But you are better now, and safe, and I will go."

"Tell me what happened," she repeated, looking at me curiously.

"Who are 'they'?"

"The two men who were waiting outside, with the cab," I said.

"He was going to carry me off, was he not?"

"Yes."

"And I fainted—what then?"

"Then," I replied, in some confusion, "then I struck him, and he fell."

"You did this to protect me?"

"Yes, Milady."

"I am grateful." She was silent a moment, and her eyes filled with tears. "Was he injured?" she asked at last.

"He was unconscious," I admitted. "I—that is—it was a more serious blow than I intended."

Her face grew white again.

"You—you did not kill him?" she gasped.

"No, no!" I answered, hastily. "He was only stunned—senseless." In my heart I was not so sure of this, but hope dominated fear.

"He was mad," she murmured, half to herself.

"It was because he loved you so, Milady," I said, softly. "He could not give you up."

"Oh, God, I know!" she returned, and hid her eyes.

I stood trembling, with tears on my face, and ready to throw myself at her feet. For I loved her, too, and I could understand how it had been with him.

"Forgive him," I said, chokingly. "He knew not what he did."

She sprang to her feet.

"He must not leave here like this," she exclaimed. "He is hurt—he is unconscious, you say; I cannot bear to have him taken away so. Go—bring him back into the house, and we will restore him. At least—at least that much must be done."

She urged me to the door with a gesture, and followed me into the hall. "Hurry!" she continued, "he may be more seriously injured than you think."

I was not loath to obey, for my solicitude was no less keen than hers. I hastened to the steps, and looked up and down the street; then I paused in amazement.

The cab was gone!

For a moment I stood staring and blinking, half-believing myself blinded and deceived by the darkness, which was only partially dispelled by the street lamp at the corner. Then, in great trepidation, I ran to and fro, gazing in all directions, but there was

no sign of the vehicle, nor of the Prince, nor of the two roughs, anywhere.

Startled and mystified, I retraced my steps to the door, where Milady stood waiting anxiously.

"Where is he?" she inquired.

As calmly as I could I answered:

"He is gone. He must have recovered, and ordered that he be driven to the hotel."

"Do you believe this?" she said, divining my inward misgivings.

"Nothing could be more probable," said I. "Undoubtedly this is what happened. I shall surely find him at the hotel."

"Then go," she said, extending her hand; "and may it prove as you think. And—Adolph—you will—let me know?"

"Yes, Milady," said I, and touched her hand, and departed.

I almost ran along the pavement until I came to a club, before which a number of hansoms were drawn up, awaiting fares. Into one of these I plunged, and commanded the driver to make the best time possible to the hotel.

That I should find the Prince there, recovered from the ill-usage he had received at my hands, I assured myself over and over again; and yet there was a gnawing dread at my heart, a feeling portentous of worse evil to come, that I could not shake off. He must have recovered his senses with marvelous quickness, if my theory regarding his movements and whereabouts was correct; yet I could have sworn, when I held my ear to his breast, that his recovery, if recover he should, would more likely be a matter of hours than of moments.

My drive seemed of interminable length. At last, however, it ended, and discharging the cabby with an extra fee, I hurried into the office. The gentleman had not come in, I was told. I ascended to our apartments. It was true—he was not there. A sort of terror seized me; I sank weakly into a chair, and tried to think what next I should do. What

had become of him? I asked myself the question a hundred times; but there was no satisfactory answer.

Finally, growing calmer, I determined to do nothing for a time save wait. Perhaps he had proceeded more slowly than I, or in a roundabout way, and would arrive presently. On reflection, I thought this a very likely theory, and assured myself that my alarm was groundless.

When the minutes dragged slowly into an hour and he did not come, my patience gave way, and I relinquished all hope of his return to the hotel.

Perhaps, I said, he went aboard the yacht. Why, yes, of course! I should have thought of this before. Two minutes later I was on the way to the dock in another hansom. Within twenty minutes I was at my destination.

The captain and all the crew were on duty, there was steam up on the vessel, and all appearances indicated readiness to put to sea. This, doubtless, pursuant to the letter of instructions that I had myself conveyed to the captain earlier in the day; but at first glance I construed it as an evidence of the Prince's presence aboard, and hope deepened into confidence.

"His Highness has come?" I inquired, quietly addressing the captain.

"No," was the reply. "We are ready and waiting."

My head reeled with the shock of the disappointment.

As I did not speak again the captain looked at me in some surprise.

"What is the cause of the delay?" he asked. "Where is he?"

"We—we must have missed each other," I stammered. "He should have been here before this." I was not prepared yet to tell him the truth. "Doubtless," I concluded, lamely, as an excuse to get away, "he is waiting for me at the hotel. I'll go back and see," and I hastily returned to the cab.

I could now no longer dissemble by hopes and theories the seriousness of the situation. The Prince had mysteriously disappeared, and that under

the most extraordinary and alarming circumstances. I, whose duty it was to be ever at his side, who was responsible for his safety, had lost him in a strange land through personal treachery, and I must find him, alive and well, or face the consequences before the King and the whole world.

What were the chances of a happy ending to this most unhappy adventure?

A thousand doubts and fears assailed me; but worst of all was that feeling of criminal guilt—that horrible dread that my savage blow had proved fatal. "He must be dead," I reasoned, "and the two rascals, fearful of being incriminated, hurried away to secrete the body and themselves. If they are arrested they will use their knowledge against me. If they knew he was a prince——"

Here a thought that caused me to start obtruded itself into my reflections. What had I said, in my nervous excitement, by way of explanation to those worthies when I called them to the door of Milady's house? My words flashed back upon me as plainly as light: "The Prince has suffered a sudden illness!" Thus I had spoken; thus I had betrayed him. And they were the sort of characters on whom such important intelligence is not lost, whose instincts are ever keenly alive to information that may result to their advantage. Further, that they would stop at no crime for the sake of profit was evident from the readiness with which they had lent themselves to the doubtful plans of their unknown employer.

I could have choked myself for my indiscretion; but undoubtedly the mischief was done, and nothing remained for me but to find a way to undo it, if such a thing were possible.

Clearly the Prince, dead or alive, was in the hands of the two knaves; my first duty, therefore, was to find them.

To add to the difficulty of my situation, I dared not engage the assistance of the police; for that would entail a publicity it was most important to avoid. Not until my own

efforts had failed, I resolved, not until the fate of the Prince was more definitely known to me, would I commit myself to the law and reveal the scandal of our clandestine enterprise.

In any case, the two might eventually communicate with me of their own motion, to extort the price of silence if he were dead, a ransom if he were living and held captive. But needless to say, my agony of mind would not permit of my passively waiting for what might eventuate at some indefinite time.

All the night I paced the streets, chiefly in the evil neighborhood where the acquaintance of the two rascals had been formed. I made many inquiries, but could learn little or nothing regarding them. It is remarkable how little is known of a disreputable of the slums when a stranger seeks in his haunts for information concerning him.

Morning came, and I returned to the hotel. The Prince was not there; there was no message for me.

Within an hour I was back again among the drinking resorts, resolved to watch and wait where there was the greatest chance of one or the other of the enemy disclosing himself.

It was about the middle of the afternoon when I again sought the hotel, determined on despatching a note by messenger to the captain of the yacht, with the object of learning, by a ruse, if the Prince had yet gone aboard.

I had no sooner reached our apartments than there was a hasty step without and a knock at the door. In response to my summons, Milady entered, looking pale and distressed.

"I saw you come in," she said. "I had no message from you—I could not bear the uncertainty any longer. My aunt is below, I—I know the Prince is not here—you have not found him?"

"No, Milady," I answered, in a low voice, and hung my head.

"Adolph!"

The tone was stern.

"Yes, Milady?"

"Did you tell me all the truth last night?"

"All the truth, as heaven is my witness!"

She covered her face with her hands and leaned against the wall, shaking with emotion.

"He is dead—I know it!" she exclaimed.

At this moment the door was unceremoniously flung open, and three men entered. The first I recognized as the head officer of the King's bodyguard, the Colonel of the First Hussars, wearing citizen's dress; the second was Count Voeglin; the third wore the uniform of an American police official.

"That is the man," said Count Voeglin, indicating me.

"I know him," said the King's officer, and advancing toward me, he added: "You are under arrest."

"On what charge?" I asked, in a stifled voice.

"On the charge of murdering your master, the Crown Prince," was the reply.

V

I STEADIED myself against a table by which I stood, and faced my accusers calmly, but with inward despair.

"The evidence, gentlemen," I said; "what is the evidence?"

"The evidence of Count Voeglin," replied the King's emissary. "It appears, Count," he continued, in an aside to his companion, "that we had no time to lose. The apartment is cleared of luggage. The bird would have been flown in another hour."

"Permit me to deny that!" I exclaimed. "Nothing was further from my thoughts. The Prince's possessions were removed from here by his own orders yesterday."

Milady took a step forward, and said, firmly:

"What is your evidence, Count? Let us have the truth!"

She had been partially concealed by the door as it opened, and her presence until now had been unob-

served. The three men turned toward her, and Voeglin bowed.

"All in good time," he said, deprecatingly.

"Now! I insist!" she returned, with set lips.

"I have no wish to embarrass you," he muttered, uneasily.

"The extent to which I am implicated in this matter calls for no equivocation," she answered, steadily.

"I insist on knowing the truth. It is my right!"

"I demand the proof that the Prince is dead!" I supplemented, impatiently.

"You will soon have proof enough," he replied, stiffly. Then, addressing his two companions, he continued: "I believe I have yet told neither of you the facts exactly as they occurred. Last evening I went to call at a certain house in a highly respectable quarter—it is not necessary to particularize—" with a meaning glance at Milady. "A closed cab stood before the house, and near by were two men whose appearance was so uncouth, and whose actions were so furtive, that they roused my suspicion. The basement of the neighboring house was dark, and there, making as if to enter, I concealed myself to observe what should take place. Almost at the same moment this man—" with a gesture toward me—"ran excitedly down the steps, looked about stealthily, and motioned to the two waiting cabmen to follow him. He conducted them cautiously into the house, and a minute after the two came out again, carrying a body between them. This body they hastily placed in the cab, and then held a whispered consultation. After this both got on the box, glanced round carefully to make sure they were not seen, and drove away, very quietly at first, then rapidly. I ran after them, and soon had the good luck to pick up a cab, in which I followed them to their destination. They drove to the east until they came to the street next to the river, and thence down for a long distance until they came to one of the most squalid quarters of the

town. They stopped at last at the entrance to a dark and foul alley, into which the body was carried. Presently one of the men came out and drove away. I proceeded cautiously through the alley, and discovered that it led to a dilapidated house that stood apart from its neighbors. A light was burning in one of the lower rooms, and through a torn place in a curtain I was enabled to see the occupants of the place, a frowsy woman and the other man. On a table lay the body. The light of the lamp fell on the features, and I distinctly recognized his Royal Highness. He was undoubtedly dead."

There was a moment of intense silence, and then Voeglin concluded:

"I left the place, and returning to my hotel, awaited your arrival, milord, which was hourly expected, thanks to your cablegram. So the night and the morning passed. From this statement of facts you will readily perceive that there is but one inference to be drawn—that this man is responsible for the death of his master, and by the aid of accomplices attempted to conceal his crime. How the deed was accomplished, for what purpose, and why at such a time and place, are points that remain to be disclosed by your official investigation."

"You have omitted a conclusion as to my part in the affair," said Milady, white as the tippet of ermine at her throat. "Am I, then, above suspicion?"

"You are," said Voeglin, with emphasis.

"If we could have arrived a day earlier," said the King's officer, gazing fiercely at me, "this crime would have been prevented. But it was impossible to get here sooner. We took the first fast steamer after your message, Count, informing us that the Prince, instead of being at sea with Coventry, was in New York. We were to take him back, but not—not as we shall take him back. God help the King when he hears this, say I!"

Only by clutching the table with all my strength was I able to stand

through this ordeal. I said, addressing Voeglin:

"You are perfectly right in acquitting the lady of all responsibility in this affair. She knew absolutely nothing of what you have related. Whatever blame is due belongs to me. I have not been asked to make a statement, but I have a statement to make. However, before it is made I again demand proofs—*proofs*, gentlemen—that the Prince is dead!"

There was a momentary pause, while they regarded me darkly.

"I suggest," remarked the police official, "that we find the Prince without further delay."

"We must not lose another moment," replied the King's officer, promptly. "It is of the gravest importance that his body be recovered."

Milady turned away, shuddering, and with uncertain steps left the apartment, Voeglin holding the door ajar for her, bowing deferentially.

"I wish to accompany you," I said to my captors.

"So you shall," answered the King's officer.

"Your desire to be confronted with the proofs of your guilt will doubtless be speedily gratified," observed the Count, with disagreeable assurance.

"I will take charge of him," said the police official. He hastily searched me for a weapon, but found none. The four of us then quitted the room. Below stairs were stationed one of the Court chamberlains and one of the King's equerries. There was also another American policeman or detective. All wore inconspicuous citizen's dress.

The party passed quietly out of the hotel severally or in pairs, thus avoiding undesirable attention. Two carriages were taken, and directed by Voeglin, we were soon on the route of his last night's pursuit.

I said nothing during the journey, and my captors but little. Our mission was of too serious a character to admit of superfluous discussion.

Arrived in the vicinity of our destination we alighted, and the sec-

ond detective made a reconnoissance. Two patrolmen were signaled, and disposed one at each end of the alley, to cut off any possible escape of my alleged confederates, whom it was the purpose to capture.

Then the party, led by the two police officials, moved swiftly through the noxious alley, and brought up at the door of the house. It was locked. The heave of a shoulder dashed it inward. We entered. No one disputed our progress. We passed from room to room. The place was vacant. The body of the Prince was not there!

Only in the first room was any evidence of interest found. On the table and bare floor were some unmistakable dark stains, and in one corner were the fragments of some letters, which I was able to identify. The hand writing was that of Milady.

They were gathered together and pocketed by the police chief. A second and more careful search was made of the house, but revealed nothing more. An exploration of the cellar also proved fruitless.

Small as our discoveries had been, to me they were appalling; to my accusers they were convincing.

And yet they proved nothing.

"We must put detectives on the case to run the scoundrels down," said the King's officer.

"The ablest men under my command shall be detailed," replied the chief. "You should have had the house watched," he added to Voeglin.

"True," answered the Count; "I made a mistake not to do so. But I did not realize the necessity—I did not anticipate that so much time would elapse before this visit. Milord was due to arrive by sunrise."

"The vessel was six hours late," said the hussar. "Well, they have succeeded in making way with him. The case is in your hands, Superintendent."

"I have one suggestion, gentlemen," I remarked, desperately, as what seemed almost a forlorn hope presented itself to me; "let us visit the Prince's yacht."

"Yacht?" was the inquiry. "Explain."

"Our voyage was made in the *Viking*," I explained. "She lies at a dock in the other river, on the opposite side of town."

"You expect to find his Highness there?" Voeglin smiled.

"It is possible," I returned.

"But not probable," said the King's officer. "However, we will go."

The second detective was left behind, with private instructions. The carriages bore us through busy commercial thoroughfares, sometimes advancing with difficulty, owing to the congestion of traffic.

At last we arrived at the dock, and walked forward to the yacht's side. I was feverish and weak, and as we neared the place all courage seemed to desert me.

Our first observation was the activity of the crew. The captain stood on the forward deck, giving orders. Then, with surprise, I noted the presence of an elderly woman on the after-deck. She sat near the companionway that led to the cabin. I recognized her as Milady's aunt.

She rose as she saw us, and went below.

The next moment the Prince, accompanied by Milady, came on deck! I gave a joyful cry.

"Thank God!" I exclaimed, and the tears blinded me.

The King's officer, with an expression of amazement and gratification, advanced to the gangway with the purpose of going aboard, but the Prince, stepping quickly to the rail, waved him back.

He smiled slightly, and saluted with mock courtesy.

"You were not unexpected," he said, "nor have I any need to inquire your object in honoring me with this visit in a foreign land. I fear I trouble you too much, milords."

"We thought you were dead!" said the King's officer.

"By no means," returned the Prince, lightly. "Count Voeglin doesn't know a dead man when he sees one."

It was apparent that Milady had acquainted him with all that had occurred in her presence at the hotel.

"Fortunately, you belied your appearance, your Highness," muttered the Count, in some confusion.

"I was not quite myself," resumed the Prince, with a glance at me, "but two or three hours' repose in a cellar brought me round. If you are looking for a dead man," he added, with a shrug of his shoulders, "you may have better success if you find the person who was guarding me in that house. I gave him a slight token of my esteem. Like the Count, he placed too much confidence in my appearance."

Milady said something in a low voice. She was standing at his shoulder and a little behind him, with a half-sad, half-smiling expression.

"Oh, no, I don't think I killed him, really," he answered. "At any rate, he was able to run. Rascals are all right so long as they can run—eh, Count? As for my further movements, milords, to save you the exertion of asking questions, I will explain that after my escape I came here and breakfasted, rested a little, secured some clean clothes and presented myself at the home of this young lady, to whom I desired to offer some apologies. As she was not in, I waited, and on her return she was good enough not only to accept my apologies, but, together with her most considerate aunt, to accompany me here. Gentlemen, the incident of my visit to America is closed. I am now on the point of sailing, and greatly regret that I cannot ask you to partake of my hospitality aboard."

He turned half round, and taking Milady's hand, looked tenderly into her face.

The King's officer appeared to be ill at ease, and for a moment at a loss what to say.

"We congratulate you most heartily on the agreeable issue of your adventure," he said, finally, and then: "It is the wish of his Majesty that we should accompany you home."

"I must deprive myself of the

pleasure of your company," replied the Prince, with unmistakable emphasis. "The King's wishes were not consulted as to my coming here, and I make bold to deny myself the advantage of following them in the matter of my return. I prefer to go as I came, unescorted. Whatever mistakes I may have made are now clear to me; I challenged fortune, I lost, and by the result I will abide. I am now returning to my own. Some harm has been done, but a lesson has been learned. My honor is safe in your hands, gentlemen, and in the future, doubtless, you will not be called on to undertake another such thankless mission."

His tone, as he concluded, was melancholy, but he smiled again, and turning his back squarely to us, lifted the hand he held to his lips.

So softly that it was scarcely audible Milady murmured: "Good-bye."

"Good-bye," he answered, in a low but distinct voice. "May you be happy, and God bless you!"

Both ladies moved to the gangway, and with his assistance stepped from the yacht. At the same time a pilot took the wheel, and two of the crew, releasing the hawsers, stood ready to cast off. The vessel was in a position to be readily got under way, and the captain but waited the signal to give the word to start.

At that instant a new fear seized me. I leaped forward to the gangway and stood appealingly before my master.

He appeared not to see me. "Cast off!" he said.

Then slowly, very slowly at first, the craft moved out, and as I saw the space between us begin to widen I knew that, though he had been forgiven himself, he had not forgiven me, and a sense of desolation came over me that words cannot describe.

Dumb and miserable, I stood there beside Milady, both heart broken, watching him drift away out of our lives.

He returned the farewell salute of the King's emissaries, and lifting his hat to Milady, remained uncovered,

gazing back at her with an expression of calm despair.

She waved her kerchief to him a little space, her eyes wet with tears, and then stood motionless, a statue of sorrow.

Her honor and truth had triumphed; but great was the cost, almost too great to bear.

Thus our Prince departed, and thus ended the clandestine romance and adventure that so nearly deprived a throne of its king. When we could no longer distinguish his face in the distance we turned about and went our several ways, saying little in farewell.

The search for the kidnappers was, I believe, discontinued by the police, in the interest of secrecy; or if they were ever apprehended and punished it was on another charge. If Count Voeglin's story was wholly true I have no means of knowing; I have sometimes entertained the idea that instead of spying on and following them, he himself instigated the outrage, and I construed a remark of the Prince to indicate that he knew the Count to have had more to do with the matter than had been confessed; but the facts must remain in doubt.

Howbeit, Voeglin has never returned to his native country; failing to win Milady, he went to South America, and after years of intrigue became president of a small republic.

The Prince's marriage to Princess Margaret of Waldburg was one of great splendor, and on the death of the King, some years ago, he ascended the throne.

Sadly and patiently I waited long for the summons to reënter his service and earn his forgiveness; but it has never come.

As for Milady, time, I hope and believe, has softened her grief.

For a long time after the incidents that I have here related in my faltering English, we did not meet; but at last, moved by an irresistible emotion, I went to her, and she held out her hands to me, as she had done on that well-remembered night when we had come across the sea, with the old,

sweet smile that was like sunshine
through a mist of tears.

We talked of the Prince. Our mutual sorrow was a bond between us, and I knew that she took a melancholy pleasure in my company.

That was the beginning.

And the end—well, I was not worthy of her, but I loved her, the old association was strong on her, and in the happy end, God in His goodness gave her to be my wife.



ONE WOMAN

I BROUGHT to her my wealth, and fame, and place—
The things I valued but for her sweet sake—
And proffered all. She turned away her face,
Nor me nor aught of all my gifts would take.

I came, an outcast, stripped of wealth and fame,
Ere tempting fortune in far, foreign lands.
Expecting but a last farewell I came,
And lo! she ran to me with outstretched hands!

WALTER GUY DOTY.



IMPOSSIBLE INCONSISTENCY

MISS HIGHE-WAYE—Poor Fido cried so when I drove away in the victoria without him!

MR. QUIZZ—Why didn't you take him with you?

MISS HIGHE-WAYE—Because I didn't go in the dogcart, of course.



SUBURBAN TERRORS

“LISTEN, Henry, I hear a burglar in the cellar!” said Mrs. Harkins.

“Great Scott, Molly!” replied Mr. Harkins, “you don't suppose he's after that peck of potatoes, do you?”



TRUE, 'TIS PITY

HODGE—Do you believe it is pluck and not luck that wins in this world?
PODGE—Yes; the ability to pluck others.

LE MASQUE DE L'AMOUR

By Guy Wetmore Carryl

JOCELYN it was lent January's maze
Of snow and sleet-swept hours the spell of Spring,
Robed in the tender tints of apple-sprays;
Jocelyn, in whose blithe eyes are laughter's rays,
As in blue pools brushed by the breeze's wing.
Jocelyn it was made January's days
Like pearls that slip their string!

Francesca made of February's noons
Strange flowers of immemorial perfume,
And wrapped them round with soft unwritten tunes;
Francesca, in whose eyes lie Southern Junes,
As smouldering embers in a darkened room.
Francesca made of February's moons
Beacons on seas of gloom!

Madge moulded March so wholly to her will
That music thrilled his every madcap wind,
And wooing warmth swept through his every chill;
Madge, whose mild eyes were innocent of ill
As violets in sheltered nooks enshrined.
Madge moulded March until his storms grew still,
And all his clamor kind.

Alice taught April double April's wile
Of laughter changing in a trice to tears,
And tears that laughter in a trice exile;
Alice, in whose soft eyes lay guiltless guile,
As the keen thorn but more the rose endears.
Alice taught April how it is a smile
May leave its trace for years!

Mabel showed May more sun-enchanted hours
Than all the old earth's myriad Mays have seen,
And with her presence shamed the burgeoned bowers;
Mabel, whose eyes Love washed with Summer showers,
As Ocean lends his shells a matchless sheen.
Mabel showed May a face that made her flowers
Like courtiers round their queen.

Janet led June along her perfumed lanes,
And taught her birds to flute more sweetly still,
And breathed new fragrance on the loaded wains;
Janet, whose scornful eyes are twin disdains,
As proud blue lilies mirrored in a rill.
Janet led June a captive in her chains
Down from the purple hill.

THE SMART SET

Judith crossed swords with fierce July, whose sun
Is not more regal than her stately air,
And round his days her rapt enchantments spun;
Judith, through whose eyes silver sparkles run,
As fireflies that the blue night's nets ensnare.
Judith crossed swords with fierce July and won,
Sole sovereign of the pair!

Audrey stole August's grapes from off his vine,
And from his grain-fields, with a sickle armed,
Cut his gold sheaves, in her coiled hair to twine;
Audrey, within whose eyes strange secrets shine,
As stars whereby the wondering night is charmed.
Audrey stole August's grapes, and made such wine
As none may drink unharmed!

Sybil it was that to September brought
A glow more ruddy than her apples' hue,
A deeper flush than all her leaves had caught;
Sybil, whose eyes glow with her hidden thought,
As the sun burns within the drops of dew.
Sybil it was that to September taught
Things no September knew.

Olive lay dreaming on October's slopes,
And drank deep draughts of his strong Autumn breeze,
And of his azure asters braided ropes;
Olive, in whose eyes faith with folly copes,
As earnest ships launched on capricious seas.
Olive lay dreaming of October's hopes,
October's wine and lees!

Nan saw November born 'neath skies of blue,
And the last flowers before her breezes bend,
And, wistful, watched her all her journey through;
Nan, in whose eyes a sudden sadness grew,
As twilight's shadows with the sunset blend.
Nan saw November born, and subtly knew
What was November's end.

Dolly drew dear December half apart,
And learned the reason of his mantling snows,
And what mysterious promise they impart;
Dolly, whose young eyes read me from the start,
As a vain book that childish hands unclose.
Dolly drew dear December to her heart,
And learned—ah me, who knows?

They stand about my Christmas fire to-night,
Maids of the months, who made my year divine,
An instant separate—then, upon my sight,
Melt into one, and in the embers' light
The love-lit eyes of Graciosa shine.
For each and every month of dear delight
Found this same hand in mine!

ONE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DAY

By Alfred Henry Lewis

THERE had been tumult and riot in Garrick's theatre of Drury Lane. The queer, dwarf, four-page papers of the day gave almost four hundred words—an unprecedented outburst; the rebellion of '45 got no more—to a relation of this violence. Seats had been smashed; the chandelier, that pride of Garrick, had been broken; the house itself was all but burned. And there was to be further riot that very evening. The coffee houses and the clubs were agog with anticipation. Garrick was not loved, and, to twist a common phrase, the very worst was hoped.

In a house in Cleveland Court, just off St. James street, a gentleman without his coat, waving slim hands with wrists all ruffles, walked about, speaking rapidly, protestingly.

"It is for that I fear for you, my Rena. Last night the mob, led by Fitzpatrick, was near to burning the theatre over Garrick's head. I should know—I, who incited Fitzpatrick to the campaign. The riot will continue to-night, and if the small creature Garrick has courage we shall destroy him. No, I don't hate him; he is a player, a vagabond by word of law, and a gentleman cannot afford the compliment of his hatred to so low a thing as a vagabond. But this Garrick has gone horn-mad with vanity; he struts and puffs and has the swelling airs, as one who deems himself of the Plantagenets—of the Tudors at least. In that he is a matter of offense to me, just as, for instance, is musk; he is a civet cat to me; and beholding his pride, I am enough of a technical Christian to countenance any method of reducing it."

"But why may I not go?" demanded the lady. "I should like the riot better than the play."

"It's a thousand sorrows, dear," responded the gentleman, "that you don't read. Then you might amuse yourself at home this evening. However, I should not make a quarrel with you for any lack of literary taste—I, who read nothing save the entries and odds at Newmarket, the betting book at White's, and an occasional novel of Crebillon's."

The time was the late morning of a January day in 1763. The speaker was the Earl of March, a leading dandy of the town. It was to his heart's mistress he spoke; that beauty, small and warm and dark, the celebrated Rena.

"But I must go to the theatre; I would die of weariness here alone," and the Rena looked lazily out from the heavy fringes of her eyes as she recurled herself like a cat on the cushions.

"You shall take the risk; go then, little lady," replied March, after a pause. "I may not go with you, as I'm to be there with Fitzpatrick. Also, I'm to be engaged during the day with Selwyn, Beauclerk and Gillie Williams, to go I know not where, and do I care not what. I'll bestow you aright, however. You shall be there in your sedan chair; and I'll despatch a cordon of bruisers with you as a guard of honor. There, it's done; you are to go, and see, and come back safe."

It was cold in London on that January day. But it was warm and bright in the Earl's house in Cleveland Court; doubly warm and bright by

virtue of the Rena, who, surrounded with the silks, and bronzes, and pictures, and rugs, and brocades, and tapestries, and golds—all products of a purse as utter as the taste that dispensed it—seemed withal a great gem in a proper setting.

St. James street, the heart of London's fashion, while as good a road as any of that time, would have made the hearts of modern paviors fail within them. It was as crude and rough as a Highland trail. Moreover, it was a wrack of snow and ice, on which the sun glanced with a cold cynicism, refusing any warmth of countenance.

March was in his thirty-eighth year—a full and heavy middle age in these declining days. Yet March was as lithe and well kept as a leading buck should be; and became his satins, his sword and his ruffles as much as ever they elegantly became him. He was a man of middle size, light rather than heavy, a bit high in the shoulder and waspish of flank. The last two characteristics came of fashion rather than of nature. His keen face, with a hard jaw and a nose a trifle on the falcon order, was made more than good by two steady gray eyes, wide between and brazenly honest, as if created to search for and condemn hypocrites. Folk had told Voltaire that he looked like this Earl of March, and the French vitriol thrower thanked them as for a compliment.

We have seen that March owned a sprightly, youthful figure, and that, too, despite his thirty-eight years. It was the more strange, perhaps, when one recalls him as the leading moral rebel of Hell Fire clubs, and of that Order of Franciscans of Medmenham Abbey, where, fifteen years before, with Wilkes and Dashwood and Sandwich, the poet Whitehead and a half-dozen others, he and they had shocked England in its most hardened era with their blasphemy and viciousness.

The health that gleamed in the eye, that glowed on the cheek and leaped in the step of March came not more from inborn stamina than the absolute care and rule wherewith he lived

what to the casual eye might seem a life of mighty recklessness. Libertine, gambler, wine bibber, he was these; and yet he never over-drove himself; was rigid to sleep and to eat and to repose himself; and thereby he stood the pace. He was heedful of his health and careful of his guineas, as became an epicurean who knew how to husband enjoyment. And so he remained to the last. He lived well, he ended well, according to his creed.

Look ahead. March dies at the age of eighty-six, in 1810, at his house in Piccadilly. He conserves himself to the last. He walks as long as he is able. An eye dies; he puts in a glass one. An ear goes deaf; he employs the other with double ardor. When he no longer walks, he hobbles forth to his vis-à-vis, whereof the body is a dark green, and horses coal black with tails that brush the streets. When he must give up his carriage and the Ring, when he may no longer hobble down the stairs, he has his chair lifted and lowered by rope and pulley from his drawing-room window. Then he sits for hours on the sidewalk of a bright afternoon, a green parasol over his head, and Jack Radford, his groom, booted, spurred, with charger standing ready to pursue and bring back any acquaintance who drives by for whose talk March—in that day “Old Queensberry”—conceives a fancy. Meanwhile his French doctor, astrologer and composer of elixirs, peers at him from a window, thinking of new lies to tell “Old Q,” and wondering how much longer he will last. In the end, 1810, he dies, leaving a harem and a million pounds in bank; and so passed the last and the best of the bucks of the eighteenth century.

At the time we encounter him March is known for his hatred of Wilkes, formerly a companion in sin and fellow Medmenham Franciscan; his contempt for the Whigs; his lack of religion; his passion for gambling at White's and at Newmarket; his patronage of the opera, and his love for the Rena. He has made his first mark in the sporting world by driving nineteen miles in one hour, for a

mighty wager, four blood horses to a whalebone, spiderish contrivance of four wheels, built by that gifted wagonmaker, Wright, of Long Acre, killing seven horses training for the experiment. That was sixteen years before the January day in Cleveland Court, St. James.

II

MARCH was assisted into a claret-colored coat, and his valet bestowed his cravat and ruffles to advantage.

"Davenport grows worse and worse," observed the dandy, stretching himself in his garments. "I would wager a thousand guineas that he is the vilest tailor in town. I must remind myself to offer that wager to Bully Bolingbrook, who insists that there's something divine in Davenport's coats."

"But you look well," observed the Rena, eying March with indolent criticism; "yes, you look very well; and so now, because you do look well, you may kiss me."

The black boy, dressed in a fantastic parody of the Turkish, came in to announce a visitor.

"Bring him up," said March, glancing for a moment at the soiled bit of paper on which a name was written. Then, as he brushed the Rena's damp, red lips with a caress, he added: "You, who love only the well-looking, my Rena, will hardly open your arms to our visitor."

"Who is he?" asked the young woman. "I thought it had been George Selwyn; you said he was to come."

"Yes, Selwyn will be here presently," said March. "Meanwhile, this is a writer—a sort of scribbler. His name is Goldsmith—Oliver Goldsmith. He is hideously ugly, and was offered to me by Topham Beauclerk as a dab at pamphlets. You know Sandwich wanted something on that villain Wilkes."

"If you are to have your writer here," said the Rena, beginning a languid stir as prior to getting off the

cushions, "I might better withdraw. I'm hardly arrayed to meet strangers," and she pulled about her curves and swells a black and yellow thing like a kimono, that gave her the effect of a little tigress.

"Nonsense!" responded March. "Remain where you are. There's enough clothes on you for a Siberian sleigh ride; much more than when you dance at the theatres."

"On the whole," said the Rena, sinking cushionward again, "I should like to see a writer. I should like to talk with him. I wonder how it would seem to have a genius—a poet—love one!" and her eyes began to dim with languor.

"Compose yourself, dearling," observed March, as he slowly paced the room; "this Goldsmith is not a genius, not a poet; and writes, I believe, nothing better than those dull Chinese letters in the journal of that pimply-faced person, Newbury; what is it called? yes, the *Ledger*."

Goldsmith came in. Shy, awkward; showily butridiculously dressed, he appeared a parody on such beaux as March, whom he evidently yet so laughably imitated. The sight of the Rena seemed to daunt him. As March surveyed his ugliness—not unkindly—he could not help reflecting: "If there were to be a contest of hideousness I would back this Goldsmith against even Lord Chesterfield, and give that Caliban of Blackheath seven pounds in the handicapping."

"Here is your pamphlet, my lord," said Goldsmith, tugging forth a manuscript. "It is done on the lines suggested by Mr. Beauclerk."

"And I've no doubt well done," returned March, tossing it upon a cabinet. "Here are ten guineas, if that will please you."

"They will do very well, my lord," said Goldsmith, as he put them away, not without a flicker of satisfaction.

"As mere guineas," observed March, "they should do as well as any, truly. As to their present employment, I must believe their yellow destinies to be looking up. To-

day they repay genius for defending Government; last night they had so vile a fate as to be won by me, with four hundred odd of their saffron fellows, from Lord Masham, over the quinze table at White's. You do not, sir," continued March, with a twinkle, "object to an honorarium in guineas that have been counters at the gaming-table?"

"It was Vespasian, I think," observed Goldsmith, with a meek sourness, "who said that 'the smell of all money is sweet.'"

"I am truly glad," remarked March, "that Vespasian, or whoever he was, said anything so much to his credit. Don't go," protested March, as the pamphleteer was about to depart. "This is the Rena, Mr. Goldsmith. Had Helen been half so fair Troy should have rejoiced in its destruction for her sake. It is my own and my only ambition to perish for the sake of beauty; and even a city could have no better fate. Sit you down, then, and talk with the Rena. She has some thought of liking genius—some hope, I take it, of having genius like her. And while you talk," concluded March, as he moved toward another room, "if I may be permitted to abandon such good and brilliant company, I will by your leave go about giving certain orders touching horses, and coats, and boots, and a trip to Paris by my valet to get new waistcoats. I have your pardon, I presume?" and March bowed cynically and with a polite laugh.

"To ask or to offer pardon," replied Goldsmith, and there was a creeping dash of bitterness, "is superfluous in a coil such as this, where no loss can occur to either. Certainly you may go, my lord, and I will remain quite at your beautiful friend's command."

"Nobly thrust!" said March, with a little laugh that was all honest and without cynicism. "Gads!" he continued, as he left the room, "my good friend the scribbler is a verbal boxer equal to anything that Steevens the Nailer ever was with his hands.

I begin to like him, and shall do him some good yet."

When they were alone the Rena nestled in her cushions and seemed depressed in ways serious, soft and winsome, as one who lived a life half perfumes and half regrets. She was now as careless of the kimono as before Goldsmith came, and her loveliness peeped at him until the poor pamphlet maker began to think the room too warm.

"You will have some wine?" said the Rena, and stretching forth an arm about whose charms Hogarth and Reynolds managed the one agreement of their lives, lifted a buckskinned stick and struck a little gong. With the same motion she thrust forth a small foot clad in a gold slipper, whereof the buckle displayed a ruby of price, and with it came an ankle like a love verse from Herrick.

"I will indeed take some wine, mistress," said the dazed scribbler, now quite weak; "I walked from Islington this morning, and am weary."

"From Islington, and in all this snow!" The Rena was aghast with a dainty yet tender horror. "Was there no coach?"

"None, wanting money," said Goldsmith. "However, I will ride back," and he felt through the flaps of his garish coat where the ten guineas lately gambled with at quinze by Lord Masham lay snug in his pocket. Then, to change a discussion whereof he distrusted the taste, Goldsmith gulped the wine the Rena tendered, and remarked: "You should be vastly happy here, mistress."

"Why, yes, truly, if I lacked a soul," said the pretty hypocrite, trying to remember a sentence or two from the last sermon of John Wesley, she being an indomitable attendant on the oratory of that divine. "I try to be happy and—and I fail." Here the thrice winsome lady furtively gleamed on the visitor with her cast-down eyes, and in a manner half-sad gave him a flash of white between her red lips. "I try for happiness, but it does not come—not, at

least, in full. We poor women are to be pitied. We make an item of a genteel establishment, like the horses. What an outlook! What can a helpless, disrated woman do?"

The guileless Goldsmith felt embarrassed by a frankness on the Rena's part which would have been brutal had it been sincere. However, he manned himself, in a spirit of clumsy innocence, to comfort the downcast from the classics.

"They may do much, mistress," he responded, with an inspiration to doughtily defend the Rena from herself; "much, indeed, they may do. Do we not read of Phryne, and what debt the ages owe her? Phryne is poor, a peasant, and as a child gathers capers to make a livelihood. But Phryne is beautiful; and you, mistress, who are also beautiful—" the Rena glowed and re-coiled herself among the cushions—"should remember that beauty is a form of genius. Phryne loves Apelles, and inspires him to his wondrous picture of the foam-born Aphrodite. She loves Praxiteles; she feeds his chisel with fire, and becomes the reason of his Cnidian Venus, which held Pliny spellbound; Praxiteles carves her once, twice, thrice in gold and in marble. She loves Hyperides, and the orator's tongue is tipped with a deathless eloquence. She can conquer reason; and when the grave judges are about to convict her of impiety she casts her robe aside, and the sight of loveliness so true and yet so helpless, convinces the magistrates of her innocence. Lastly, she is rich, and would rebuild the Theban wall, thrown down by the Macedonian, asking no reward save the inscription, 'Destroyed by Alexander the Great; restored by Phryne the courtesan.'"

"And did Phryne fail of nothing, then?" asked the Rena, her eyes now wide and dancing.

"Yes," responded Goldsmith, with a dogged slowness, looking at the floor; "yes, she failed once. She offered her love to Xenocrates, the philosopher, and he declined her.

"And you, I suppose, are also a philosopher," said the Rena, with a little click of teeth, and sitting up among her cushions like a ruffled rose.

"Here, here!" said March, coming into the room, "you are not to rend my friend Goldsmith, O my sweet tiger-cat, merely because he prefers philosophy to love. All men are not so weak as I; or perhaps they lack my profound appreciation of the beautiful."

Here he pinched the Rena's ear, and elicited the music of her laugh.

"How much do you make a year, Mr. Goldsmith?" asked March, bluntly. "I ask because, if you care to do it, I see pamphlet work ahead."

"I made sixty-eight pounds last year."

"So little!" exclaimed the Rena. "I give five times that sum to Mr. Wesley myself." Then she fell to eating fruit, having, after all, but a dull interest in poverty.

"The work I contemplate would double that," said March, "and I will communicate with you from time to time."

"I shall be proud to have your commands, my lord," observed Goldsmith, again making ready to go. "I live in Islington; but a word left at the Cheshire Cheese will reach me. No, mistress," turning to the Rena, "poverty is not pleasant, yet I believe it to be good for authorship. Genius should be fed, but not fattened—like hunting dogs and running horses."

"I am for Government," observed March, at the same time eying his visitor carefully; "you have gathered some notion of what I will want by the pamphlet you have done. Your name will not be used; yet I trust, sir, that what we shall ask of you will not infringe on your political convictions. I should be sorry to urge one to write against his own politics."

"Those who have lived in St. Giles have no politics, my lord." Then, tossing his hand with a gesture of helplessness: "I am not to blame, my lord, for English taste, or rather,

the English want of it. A writer must starve or be ready to pull his quill, as a highwayman does a pistol, and take purses with it. I give you good-day, my lord."

"Do you know, I couldn't so much as kindle a spark in that clod!" said the Rena, when Goldsmith was gone. And then she pouted.

"We move among wonders, my child," said March, with mock sympathy.

III

THEN, with a great clatter, came again the attendant black boy, and this time a gentleman swathed in furs like a Russian was stamping at his heels.

"I will wait for no announcement," cried the stranger. Then he threw back the furs, kissed the Rena and shook March by the hand.

"How are you, George?" observed March; "though it is folly to ask of your health."

"Then do not ask it," said George Selwyn; "and do not interrupt me while I do all the talking, for I've a dozen things to say, and must then run away to Newgate to lunch with a murderer who is to be made a tassel of to-morrow at Tyburn. I am to ride in the coach with him, be on the cart with him, and become the repositor of his last gurgle. He has promised to confide to me the exact state of his feelings after the black cap is drawn over his eyes. But what is the matter with the Rena? You look quite blighted, child."

"That scribbler Goldsmith was just here, and the Rena would make love to him. He had the hardihood to repulse her, and now she raves with anger." Thus did March playfully explain.

"O my pearly!" cried Selwyn, "I would that I had been more diligent to come. Had I been in time I might have saved you this defeat. This Goldsmith is beyond conquest. Actually, he withstood the Bellamy; and that was six years ago, when the

Bellamy was queen of Drury Lane, as radiant as a star. He sent her a tragedy; she sought him with her chariot at Old Griffiths's, where the unfortunate Goldsmith was a hack writer—as, forsooth, is he yet—for a pound a week and what scraps of crusts and mutton that lumbering, fat old she-dragon, Mrs. Griffiths, would give him. Yes, gad! the Bellamy, chariot and four, invaded Paternoster Row, where the Griffiths laired, tore Goldsmith from their talons—for the afternoon—and bore him away to her house in Southampton street. And yet this Irish boor would not love her! What do you think of it! Bellamy told me herself, while the noble blood of the Tyrawleys mounted to her indignant cheeks! Dr. Dodd, the lecturer of St. Olave's Church, was there at the time. You know Dodd, the Rev. Dodd, March? He was with us that night at the Beefsteak Club, sang the best song, told the best story—for gentlemen only—and drank us all under the table. Quite the tavern king is Dodd!"

"You mean the night when we all got drunk and burned our wigs in the fireplace and almost poisoned everybody in the room?"

"The very occasion," said Selwyn. "You should know this Dodd better, March; he might be of use to you. He's a preaching marvel of grace and wickedness. He takes lessons in elocution and acting from Shuter and Mossop. Even little pippin-faced Kitty Clive taught him how to go through the marriage service dramatically. The result is, he's the idol of all the ladies of St. Olave's; they've paid his debts three times, and even forgave him when he married."

"And whom did he marry, pray?" asked the Rena. "So many should have clung to this paragon, I marvel he could make a choice."

"The dilemma March and I are in, exactly," rattled Selwyn. "But Dodd had more power of concentration than we. He married a favorite of Lord Sandwich—plundered her from our noble friend's very arms, as it were."

"And what said Sandwich?" asked March; "it's strange I should not have heard of these dulcet doings."

"Not strange at all," retorted Selwyn; "had Gillie Williams and I been half so devoted to the ladies and Newmarket and hazard as you, we should have missed it; but thank heaven! we were more at our leisure. Sandwich, on the trying occasion alluded to, behaved with a Christian resignation almost suspicious; gave Dodd and the lady his blessing and a thousand pounds, and had Dodd named a chaplain to the King, or something, where he draws money and hectors heaven in behalf of the royal house with all the éloquence, my dear Rena, of your own great Wesley."

"Mr. Wesley is a good man," declared the Rena, spiritedly. "You both scoff and laugh at all good men; it is your defense. I shall always go to hear Mr. Wesley."

"The Rena has even dragged me away to hear Mr. Wesley once or twice," said March. "It was not bad fun. The children sang well; quite like a new kind of opera, in a way. And a great crowd was there, for Wesley is the St. Paul of the shopkeepers, who require a hell to keep their apprentices from robbing their tills and squeezing their wives. As for Wesley, he was brilliant, full of force; but, sir, an actor, as much as Garrick or Spranger Barry. Speaking of actors, Shuter, you know, is a follower of Wesley; that is, a follower like the Rena. They both contribute handsomely to the cause in guineas if not in example; and after all, religion, like war and everything else, demands a treasure chest."

"I will no longer listen while you traduce Mr. Wesley!" and the Rena stamped with her gold slipper, at which the ruby in the buckle glowed like blood.

"And so you shall not," said Selwyn. "It all had its start in your madness for that indurated Goldsmith, and with one more assurance that it is no disgrace to fail where the

Bellamy met defeat, we'll close the incident, as we statesmen say."

"However, on the whole," mused the Rena, "even though he did not admire me, I believe I like this Mr. Goldsmith. He is ugly, but he is a genius. And I should love a toad if it were a genius."

"Your taste is becoming a scandal, ladybird," observed March. "George and I shall not object to your worship of Goldsmith, but why distress us with fears for your understanding by calling him a genius?"

"Tut, tut, Will!" interjected Selwyn; "this fellow is a genius. I smell poetry on him as one smells hidden fire in a room. He will do it yet, this Hecla of sentiment and verse; he will erupt. And bank not on his ugliness, O best of gamblers and worst of literary judges! The music of the moon sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale. But I must away," continued Selwyn, "and not keep Newgate and my murderer waiting."

"Will you be at Drury Lane to-night?" asked March. "We mean to force the upstart Garrick to his knees, or all shall be wreck in that theatre."

"Heavens, what I shall miss!" moaned Selwyn. "But I can't make it, Will. I must go to Mrs. Fitzroy's following the festival with the homicide, to see her baby daughter, who is ill, and take to her a doll I've somewhere in my furs—I had it from Paris. And at night I'm going—but this is not to be mentioned, as it's a secret—to Westminster. They are about to open a royal tomb, and gave me private information, knowing how I dote on the rummage of a sepulchre. They mean to turn their backs, too, I think, and let me steal a fragment—a vertebra or something. I wouldn't be absent for worlds."

"I'm sorry," said March. "I wish you could have been at Drury Lane. You might have looked after the Rena. She will go, however much the signs may threaten sticks and stones."

"Oh, Beauclerk and Gillie will be there," responded Selwyn. "You

won't miss me. But you must keep your eye on the Rena when Beauclerk is by. He has all of that admiration for the ladies and the drama which so strongly marked his ancestors, King Charlie and the little Gwynn."

"That Beauclerk!" responded the Rena, with a sniff of contempt. "He is a mere boy—a child who is hardly twenty."

"Four-and-twenty," protested Selwyn; "'pon honor! Now if he were twenty years older—as old as I, in truth—no one should fear him. As it is, he is a menace."

"You do not know how staid the Rena is," laughed March. "Moreover, she loves the Hanovers too dearly to have aught to do with the Stuarts."

"I had thought her a Jacobin," teased Selwyn. "Do you not remember how she raged at me when I told her I had witnessed the execution of Lord Lovat, and that was sixteen years ago? Said it was an outrage on the Fraser to go and see his head chopped off."

"And so say I still," said the Rena.

"But I made Lovat amends, fair censor," mocked Selwyn; "for, realizing the outrage, as you well describe it, I went, as they prepared him for his funeral, and saw his head sewed on again."

"Don't speak to him, Rena," laughed March, and then to the airy Selwyn: "George, you are not to be cured. But odds, man! leaving traitors and murderers, axes, blocks and tombs; what's the news? Who stirs, and to what end?"

"No news except that I played whist with the Baptist (Henry St. John), Bully and Dicky Edgecumb at Almack's last night, and lost fifteen hundred pounds. It was two hundred a point and two thousand on the rub, so, for a loser, I did even well. But harrow and alas!" continued Selwyn, with assumed grief, "I fear me no such sum awaits at my bankers; so I hie to you, my partner, for relief."

"And it is ready and simple

enough," responded March. "I've some eight thousand pounds at Coutts's, and will transfer two thousand of them to you. I would make it more, but shortly I go to Newmarket—the Rena goes too, by the way; she says the country air is suited to her—and I wouldn't like to cramp my betting if a good thing appeared."

"I shall myself have money in by that time," said Selwyn, "so do not hesitate at any wager your judgment decides for. You will be in town following the races?"

"We may stop a day or two at Strawberry Hill with Horry Walpole. You remember, dear—" turning to the Rena—"how, the last time we were there, our presence almost ruined him with his neighbors, and was like to bring that varlet Wilkes about his ears again in the *North Briton*."

"Well," bustled Selwyn, getting again into his furs, "I must away. There's nothing more to tell save that Tom Hervey's to print another letter about his wife and send it to all the clubs and coffee houses—odd way to entertain one's self, that! Also, there's been made a rule at White's that quinze players must keep fifty guineas in front of them or give up their chairs. Lastly, old Mackreth, who owns the club, you know, writes me that he is about to retire and make over White's to his relative, the Cherubim, and bespeaks my favor for the latter, and that I will hereafter borrow money from that person as freely as I have from him."

Selwyn, with this, started for the door, which the trousered, scarfed and turbaned young blackamoor stood ready at hand to open. At the threshold he paused.

"I almost forgot," he cried; "Gillic Williams and Topham Beauclerk await you at Betty the fruiterer's in St. James street."

"I'll be with them on the instant," replied March.

"How queer George is!" said the Rena, as Selwyn descended to the street. "All for murderers and babies, tombs and dolls."

"The best fellow in the world," replied March, "but the strangest. He has two great loves—a passion for children and a passion for executions. Six years ago he was missing for a month. No one knew whither he had fled, and several of our friends, with homes out of town, trembled till they heard from their faithful wives. But he had only skulked over to Paris to enjoy the execution of Damiens. You recollect, the wretch who stabbed and wounded the King while at Versailles? They burned off Damiens's right hand first with a slow fire. Then they tore his flesh with pincers and poured melted lead into the wounds, and cauterized them with oil and resin and wax. Lastly the rogue was literally wrenched limb from body by four powerful Percheron horses. As George crowded his way close to the low scaffold where Damiens was suffering—they were burning away his hand at the time—the chief executioner observed him.

"Make way for the Englishman!" he cried, parting the crowd with a hand-wave; 'make way for the Englishman! He is a brother professional.'

"Thanks for your courtesy," said George, and then with reluctant shame he added, 'I am sorry to be obliged to correct you, however; I am not entitled to your compliment. I have not the honor to be a professional executioner, only an amateur.'"

IV

AT Betty the fruiterer's March scowled Beauclerk and Williams.

"Betty," said March, following the salutations of his friends, "send to the Rena, at my house in Cleveland Court, a pine, and say that I would write her my compliments with the fruit, but your ignoble stall possesses no paper better than that which wraps a parcel. Now, my comrades," turning to Williams and the descendant of the Stuarts, "come with me to the Thatched House. I must do an

errand. Come; you shall drink from what flasks you will."

"I am abstinent," said Gillie Williams, "as one should be who is ending his fourth decade. I drink nothing but saloop for a month yet; sassafras, they say, clears the blood."

"Leaving my blood to clear itself as best it may," said Beauclerk, "I will think up some wine to have as we journey on our way."

In the parlor of the Thatched House, over what they would for drink, March despatched a messenger.

"And tell him to come without delay," he added. "I will not be made to wait."

"And who may this be that you summon so cavalierly?" asked Williams, busy with his sassafras.

"Jack Slack, bruiser and butcher," responded March. "His shambles and shop are at close hand, and we shall not be long detained. I want him to bring a band of his pugilists to guard the Rena's chair to-night, as I cannot be with her at the theatre. I am having this sallow-faced, effeminate popinjay Fitzpatrick, who some say is a woman in disguise, make mob war on the jackanapes Garrick. The pretext is the high charges to pit, stalls and boxes. Certainly I care little for his prices, but they are convenient as a *casus belli*, and I desire revenge on the mountebank for a slight put on me when last I visited his stage."

"And what was that, pray?" inquired Beauclerk.

"Why, sir, I was one night behind the scenes," replied March, and a scowl began to gather at the recollection. "Catching a glimpse of a pretty girl of his company, Miss Bride, I crossed the stage to salute her. This Garrick was tossing about in *Lear* at the time, and was pleased later to show a temper in the green-room and say I had spoiled his scene. I should have pulled his nose, but there were no appliances at hand wherewith to wash my fingers afterward, so I let it go for the nonce. I

hope to see his theatre pulled about his ears to-night."

"It would have been burned last night," said Williams, "had not Moody, the Irish actor, snatched the candle from the hand of one of your amiable myrmidons who was willing to oblige with his incendiarism."

"Yes," responded March, "and unless this pasteboard king yields and restores half-prices as they were last season, to-night will behold his ruin. I shall be there to urge on Fitzpatrick and have an eye to the saving of Miss Bride."

"Do not blunder with Miss Bride," said Beauclerk. "This shaggy Hercules, Churchill the poet, who wrote the 'Rosciade,' and goes about with a club, like his prototype, and breathes of battles and sudden death, is most besottedly in love with that actress. She has shown him favor, and he declares he will fight with any who attempts her."

"Does he, forsooth!" replied March, with a sneer; "then should this club-carrying monster of love and war and rhymes seek for me without delay. For I tell you, I have enjoyed the lady's friendship quite as much as he. Gads! the lumbering *jongleur* has been made to wait an hour by his Dulcinea because I was with her."

"I know this Churchill well," said Williams. "He was both a priest and a married man, and cast off his wife and his gown together. 'I get rid of two damned heavy loads,' said he. Then he starved about the gin-cellar and kennels of St. Giles, eating refuse off greasy tables, where they chained knife and fork to the board lest he steal them. It was the Lloyds who took the outcast up; and he wrote his 'Rosciade.' Later he alarmed little Garrick with his 'Apology,' and our small green-room coward, who has a dwarf's heart in his dwarf's body, sent for him and gave him money to be his friend."

"He is to have this Churchill," said March, "satirize the wax-faced Fitzpatrick in an eighth edition of his 'Rosciade,' I hear; but for that I care nothing. For myself, I shall have

him to Hyde Park and run my sword through his big body should he take that foul-feeding pen to me for so much as one ill syllable."

"He is a drunkard," observed Williams, "who, to right a wrong, would sooner drink than duel, and there's no fear of him. Moreover, if one would have this Churchill out of the way one has but to send him a guinea, and he will drown himself in drink with all imaginable speed."

"I was taught so much," interrupted March, "by the Bride one day, as we cooed and he clamored at the street door to see her."

"But why is it you so hate the poor fellow?" asked Beauclerk. "Truly his 'Rosciade' is a work of worth, as much as anything that was ever done by Pope or old Dryden. Also, your Churchill has not a bad heart at all. I met him once with this flighty little Scot, Boswell, who so runs from Derrick to Sheridan, and from Sheridan to Tom Davies, and from Tom to Tom's pretty wife, crying to be presented to my great friend, the snuffy old dictionary maker, Johnson. I will take it back, however, concerning Davies's wife; as, from the leers he casts upon her over the cups as they drink tea in Tom's back parlor, I fear me this Boswell hath tenderer plans for her. 'Tis a parlous small Scot, this Boswell!"

"And of about your age and ardor, Beauclerk," laughed Williams, "so one may readily see in what dangers poor Davies keeps his shop and wife."

"I know Davies," remarked March. "This same hammersmith of rhymes—this Churchill—drove him from the Drury stage with four lines:

"'With him came mighty Davies—on my life,
That Davies hath a very pretty wife!
Statesman all over!—in plots famous grown!—
He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone—'

said Churchill, and poor Tom could never be dragged before the foot candles again. But truly, Beauclerk, and if you hold his spouse to be in

peril of this burning Boswell, is it not your duty to warn Davies?"

"I think not," responded Beauclerk, dipping once at Williams's saloop, and making a wry face. "Satan take sassafras, say I!" and he put down the cup. "No, it would be out of my character as an immoralist to say a guardian word to Tom. And if I were to do so, he has enough of wit to suspect my motive and accuse me of love for Mrs. Tom and a jealousy of Boswell, rather than a care for him."

"You asked a bit ago why I distaste the man Churchill," said March. "Briefly, then, is he not friend and aid and writer to Wilkes, who is so much the foe of Dashwood, Sandwich and myself? Is that not reason enough? I trust to see both disposed of; Churchill in the Fleet, and Wilkes before Lord Mansfield for treason, before ever we be done."

"And Wilkes, too, hath a wit," observed Beauclerk, meditatively, over his glass. "If I were no Stuart, and sure Bute would not suspect me of treasonable thoughts and a misliking for King George, I should love Wilkes as I love all men of wit. Do you remember how he said he could not play whist, being unable to tell a king from a knave? That was a rare shot!"

There was a stamping of heavy feet, freeing themselves from snow, in the common room without. Then the door of the parlor opened and a hulking fellow came in and bowed to March and his companions with an air of rough subserviency. He was broken of nose, narrow of forehead, thin of lip, bony of face, and with a jaw of iron. His rough, red skin glowed rougher, redder still with the icy winds of the January weather. He approached the fireplace with an easy, coarse freedom, as if noble society were nothing new to him, and kicking the logs together to make them blaze, said, "I'll 'ave a bit of gin, your lordship."

"Who's your rugged friend, March?" asked Beauclerk, with a yawn directed at the marred counte-

nance of the invader, where he stood by the fire.

"Don't you know?" responded March. "I'm surprised that you have missed an honor so easy to attain. No less, forsooth, than Jack Slack the butcher, ex-champion of England's prize ring. Look at his shoulders, a cloth-yard wide, I warrant! He beat Broughton, who was backed by the Duke of Cumberland, and won the championship, and cost the Duke ten thousand pounds that he was so unwise as to wager on Broughton. Slack defeated his man, and the Butcher of Culloden was ten thousand pounds poorer by virtue of the Butcher of Chandos street. The Duke wagered against you through professional jealousy, as a rival butcher, didn't he, Slack?"

"I 'ates to 'ear you speak so of 'is R'yal 'Ighness," mumbled Slack, in an apologetic way, over his gin. "'E was a great patron of sport, 'is R'yal 'Ighness was. But your lordship always was a chaffer, an' I don't mind, an', belike now, neither does 'is R'yal 'Ighness."

"Slack wore his championship until three years ago," resumed March, "when I had the double pleasure of seeing him trounced by Bill Steevens, the Nailer, and of winning five hundred guineas from his 'R'yal 'Ighness,' as Slack describes him. The Butcher of Culloden on this last fistic occasion was betting on his fellow craftsman."

"But your lordship bears me out," interrupted Slack, eagerly, "w'en I says to you gen'lemen all as 'ow sub-sekevintly I trains up Geordie Meggs, an' Geordie, 'e beat the Nailer, 'e did, an' 'e's the champion now."

"It was a cross, Slack," said March, coolly; "the Nailer could have beaten a coach load of Geordies that day. You paid the Nailer to lie down."

"Don't disturb our friend, Will," said Williams. "If he did arrange a cross he did no worse than I've seen at White's and Almack's. Tell Mr. Slack why you sent for him, and save his blushes."

Williams, for all his railery, really

felt sorry for the humbled gladiator, who seemed in plain confusion over the charge of a "cross;" the more so, probably, because the charge was true.

"Yes, your lordship," said Slack, hunching his huge shoulders in a deprecatory way; "I knows you was always a chaffer; but just the same, I'd like to 'ear your lordship's orders. Is it a match for Geordie Meggs?"

"No," responded March, "it's against my present rule to wager on prize battles. Selwyn, my betting partner, and I talked it over, and we decided never hereafter to lay so much as a shilling on anything that can talk; that is, men, women and parrots. No, Slack, it's nothing so vulgar as a ring battle that brings you to the Thatched House. You are to become a knight and guard a damsel. You will collect at least six of your bully-boys, and as many more as would like, after midnight, to be drunk with you, and repair to my house just before the play, and guard the Rena's chair to the show. You are to stay and take her home; and at any time during the play, in case of serious trouble, you are to see her safe out of the theatre, and knock down whatsoever of the nobility or the rabble, lord or commoner, seems meet and proper in your sight. Do you understand?"

"Yes, your lordship," said Slack; "I'll bring along my lads, and the lady shall be puffickly safe; an' I doubts not as 'ow we'll show 'er a bit of rare sport besides. Is there any-one in p'ticler your lordship would be pleased to 'ave knocked down?"

"No one," said March, with mock seriousness. "I'm absolutely impartial in the matter, Slack!"

"And now, my children," said Beauclerk to March and Williams, when the huge bruiser had departed, "if you will be so kind with your company to one so much younger than yourselves, we will first have March pay the lawing at this crib, and then repair to the Cheshire Cheese. I have a word to say to my friend of *Rambler* fame, the good Johnson, and I learn

that he'll be there. You must come, March; you've never met the sage of Inner Temple Lane."

"I will go very readily," responded March, "but I can't see for my life, Beauclerk, what leads you to bother with these book people. Their work is well enough when you have call for it; I got a pamphlet to-day from an Islington fellow named Goldsmith; but why one should hunger for their society is a mystery too deep for me."

"But, my dear March, you do not understand," said Beauclerk. "I'm bound by an inexorable fate to like literary people. I've a library of thirty thousand volumes; and these book men are forever ransacking them and pulling them off their shelves. I'm obliged to like literary people, or their raids would drive me mad."

V

In the raftered room at the Cheshire Cheese were to be found fire and cleanliness and comfort and dancing shadows. Three men sat about a table on this short, dark, wintry London afternoon, and a smoking bowl in the centre of the board, as well as the mugs at their elbows, showed them to be laudably engaged. The coarse man, with features fatty and vulgar, wig unkempt and awry, stained and spotted garments, buttons gone at knee and neck, and with a general atmosphere of slovenliness enveloping him, who sat round-shouldered and uncouthly in his chair, was the celebrated Samuel Johnson. The slight, dapper, nervous little man, dressed like a beau, who fidgeted and talked anxiously, and with sentences broken by exclamations and repetitions without sense, was David Garrick, of Drury Lane. The third was our friend of the morning, Goldsmith, who had come to have a bowl of bishop with his bullying friend Johnson before wending Islingtonward to bed.

"Now, sir," said Johnson, with an austere rumble, interrupting Garrick, "you must sit quiet awhile. Why

should you dominate us? You have just come in, and have no more title to destroy the conversation than Goldsmith and I were about than you have to burn the inn. Suppose you are the best among players; sir, that is but another way of saying that you are the best of the least among men, and can give you no precedence. Moreover, Davy—"and here the lexicographer's voice sank from the rumble austere to the rumble reproachful, "it is but a fortnight since you refused me an order for the play because a seat was worth three shillings. Out on you, Davy! to be so close with me, preceptor and friend, who tramped to London town with you, both of us poor as mice. And now you come seeking advice in your troubles! But I'll have my talk first with Goldy." Then turning from the flustered Garrick to Goldsmith, he said: "And what more said this eminent Horace Walpole?"

"Why, sir," replied Goldsmith, "he said he liked not your *Idlers*, and that, while you might have wasted no more than the evenings of a week writing 'Rasselas,' the philosophy in the book needn't have consumed an hour."

"Walpole!" interrupted Garrick, peevishly; "why, sir, he is as shallow as a skimming dish, and of no more critical taste than a Towser dog."

"No, I remember now," observed Johnson, with a gleam. "The same depthless rogue said you were no player."

"But Garrick is right whatever!" said Goldsmith. "This coxcomb Walpole can never separate his envy from his taste. He abuses Sterne, and declares there was never the book so dull as 'Tristram Shandy.' 'To read it,' says this Walpole, 'is to smile a moment and yawn an hour. The humor is forever being aimed at and forever being missed.' The great Warburton now insists there has not been in two centuries anything like 'Shandy.' He sent Sterne a purse of gold, and told the other bishops that Sterne was the English Rabelais."

"And what said the bishops, sir?" demanded Johnson, refilling his mug.

"They asked who Rabelais was."

"Well," observed Johnson, after an interval filled with a tentative sipping of the hot drink, "I have no fault to find because this Walpole does not like my work. Yet, sir, the trouble lies here: I have too much morality for him. This noble rake feels himself criticized. It is the same with the beetle-browed Chesterfield. Such ribald folk, sir, hate a moral man, just as they dislike a chaste woman."

"Was it not Chesterfield, sir," asked Garrick, still smarting, and willing for some trifle of revenge, "was it not Lord Chesterfield who said you were 'a respectable Hottentot who threw his meat everywhere but down his throat?'"

"And if it were, sir," retorted Johnson, with a roar, "it meant no more than that he was sore because I did not dedicate my dictionary to him. The man never saw me eat in his life."

There was a pause, broken at last by Johnson.

"Now, sir," he continued, suddenly turning to Garrick, and in tones of kind interest, "what is it we would say? What of this tumult in your theatre last night? I hear they tried to burn the house."

"It is this rancorous Fitzpatrick," replied Garrick. "He hates me and is put forward by others of my foes. They make a pretext of my raising the charges for tickets."

"And pray, sir, why should you raise the charges? Do you not get rich fast enough?"

"But I have raised the expenses of the house. It costs me ninety pounds every time I ring up my curtain; last season it was but sixty."

"And, sir," said Johnson, "I will remember what you forget. You have also enlarged your house, and nightly take in three hundred and seventy-five pounds where before it was two hundred and fifty. Sir, the public cares nothing for your expenses. Moreover, this is not a question of

justice, but one of expediency. You say that you fear for your building if you do not restore the old-time charges?"

"On my life, sir, I fear they'll tear it down to-night if I don't yield."

"Then yield, sir," said Johnson. "Since there's no principle at bay beyond the principle of avarice, doubtless the world will deem the better of you for your complacency."

"I fear I must," observed Garrick, gloomily.

"Davy, you're a great hare-heart," said Johnson, surveying him with an amused cynicism; "vanity and cowardice are your weaknesses, Davy."

"Why, sir, because I yield to your advice?" responded Garrick, with warmth. "Is a man a coward who takes the only method of saving himself from destruction? And as for vanity, sir, I see no reason for the charge."

"Noreason!" quoth Johnson, "and you've just taken off Mallet's 'Elvira,' as bad a piece as ever came to London town, which you accepted because Mallet promised you a puff in his 'Life of Marlborough!' Call you that by any name but vanity?"

"The piece was a good piece," contended Garrick. "It did not suit the vulgar; but what then? As your friend Chesterfield says: 'The vulgar are seldom right, and then only for a wrong reason.'"

"It was a wretched piece," declared Johnson, dogmatically. "What was good in it was not new, and what was new was not good. But I'll retract, Davy, my charges of cowardice and vanity. And I'll allow none to abuse you but me. Still, it is my thought that, in case of a demonstration to-night, you might show wisdom in retreating to your tariff of last year. The public likes not change; surely not a change for the worse."

"I shall have my revenge on Fitzpatrick, however," said Garrick. "Hear what Churchill is to say of him in a next edition of his 'Rosciade,' which we have even now on the press. It is the severest thing in language. You will note that Churchill does not

name him, but the description marks the creature for every eye. Churchill got his idea from my 'Fribbleriad.' Observe, now, how Fitzpatrick is flayed." And Garrick began to read from a proof sheet he took from his pocket:

"A motley figure of the Fribble tribe,
Which heart can scarce conceive or pen
describe,
A six-foot suckling, mincing in Its gait,
Affected, peevish, prim and delicate;
Fearful It seemed, though of athletic
make,
Lest brutal breezes should too roughly
shake
Its tender form, and savage motion
spread
O'er Its pale cheeks the horrid, manly
red.
Much did It talk, in Its own pretty
phrase,
Of genius and of taste, of players and
plays;
Much, too, of writing which Itself had
wrote,
Of special merit, though of little note;
For Fate, in a strange humor, had de-
creed
That what It wrote none but Itself should
read.
Much, too, It chattered of dramatic laws,
Misjudging critics and misplaced ap-
plause;
Then, with a self-complacent, jutting air,
It smiled, It smirked, It wriggled to the
chair."

"It will crush the man," said Johnson. He was deeply impressed; for Garrick read well, and no strength was lost through him. "What think you, sir?" asked Johnson, turning to Goldsmith.

"Crush him, yes," replied Goldsmith; "but it's too powerful for so slim a purpose. Do you know this silken fop Fitzpatrick? Why, sir, it's to burn a barn to boil an egg!—a bludgeon to a gnat!"

"I fear you do not like Churchill," said Garrick to Johnson, as he pocketed the proof sheet and prepared to go. "He tells me he asked you to dine, and you refused."

"I did not refuse," returned Johnson, making a grimace; "I merely failed to accept. I like the man well

enough, but I do not like his company. I have liked a dog, sir; but I did not dine with the dog."

Then Johnson was left to empty his bowl of bishop alone. Garrick departed to prepare himself for the coming trouble of the night. Goldsmith, who liked Garrick as little as he liked trouble, declined an order for a seat at the theatre, giving as an excuse that the *Ledger* was shouting for another "Citizen of the World," and staged his way to "merry Islington."

As Johnson mused, there rose a vast noise. Into the room came Beauclerk, March, Williams and George Selwyn, the latter having encountered the others at the door.

"And we had given you up till to-morrow, George," March was saying. "I was just picturing you to Beauclerk and Gillie as running between the dying and the dead—the murderer who hangs to-morrow, and the monarch mouldering at Westminster; and presto! up you turn and show me a false picture-maker."

"I could not help it, March," said Selwyn. "Those knaves at Westminster, after having me in a sweat for a week, postpone digging out my king. As for the murderer, I left him in a most Christian frame, eating sirlöin and potatoes, sure of heaven to-morrow. This last, on the bare word of a tavern chaplain with a marvelously red nose."

"A pure hoax," said Williams to Beauclerk, for the two were holding a side conversation touching the Cock Lane ghost, which spectre had been a popular wraith a short time before; "a pure hoax, I assure you. As Horry Walpole said, 'a mere cheap fraud of knocks and scratches.'"

Johnson and March were made known to each other by Beauclerk. The others and the philosopher had met before. The newcomers, gay of costume in contrast with the dull and slouchy garb of Johnson, noisy as against his rather sour taciturnity, drew chairs to the table. It was plain that March had not conquered Johnson's love at first sight. This may

have been the reason why March, with a praiseworthy hope of uplifting Johnson's spirits, ordered another bowl of bishop. Johnson took this as a text.

"Why, sir," said he, staring arrogantly at March, "I perceive you to be one who loves drink."

"And if it be so?" remarked March, arching his brows.

"Nothing, save this," responded the dogmatist: "you may have sobriety and knowledge, or drink and ignorance."

"From which," observed Beauclerk, gaily, "one must infer you to be a six-bottle man at least, March. Not a drop less would explain the miracle of all you do not know."

"If I may amend your word 'drink' to 'wine,'" said March, replying to Johnson, "I am constrained to say that the wisdom of the wise whom I've encountered reconciles me fully to that ignorance and claret you have joined as twins. There is but one man of brains in England," continued March, cheerfully, eager to irritate Johnson, "and that is Hume."

"Hume, sir!" ejaculated Johnson, growling his scorn; "Hume is an imitation, and an imitation is ever a failure. Hume, sir, is the merest echo of Voltaire."

"I am obliged to you, sir," smiled March; "you have multiplied my respect for Voltaire beyond measure."

"Impertinence, sir!" roared Johnson, who supposed March, from his groomed, sleek appearance, to be much younger than he was; "impertinence comporteth ill with youth."

"That can have no concern with me," replied March, with an air of irony. "I have for long been no boy. I am crowding forty years, sir, while Beauclerk tells me you are no more than fifty-four. But what account years? The thickest dolt I ever knew was fifty-four." And March beamed on the wrathful editor of the *Rambler*.

"Go on, gentlemen," said Selwyn, tasting his drink; "you do famously.

Quite like a bear-baiting, eh, Gillie? A case of snap and claw."

"On what, sir, do you found such an existence as yours?" asked Johnson of March, after a pause, and meanwhile eying that nobleman in deep disdain.

"You will believe me," replied March, "when I tell you I do not make the mistake of being better or worse or other than my times. I match the world I live in, sir. My cardinals of existence are wagers, women and wine."

"You have forgotten the fourth, sir—a foppishness of dress."

"You mean my decency of apparel, sir," returned March, sweetly. "I should have named it, but I feared you would feel criticized."

"I have one thing to thank you for," observed Johnson, with much acrimony, yet not a little worried to find a stout and ready combatant where one was so little looked for; "you permit me to felicitate myself with the thought that we agree on nothing."

"You mistake, sir," retorted March. "We agree on politics. We are both Whigs in spirit. We have both sold out and become Tories; you for a pension of three hundred pounds, and I for my place in the Royal bedchamber."

"Gentlemen," snorted Johnson, starting up, "you will pardon me if I leave bad company."

"Assuredly," said the incorrigible March, as the incensed doctor stumped out of the tavern; "the more readily as your doing so will tend vastly to improve it." Then continuing to Beauclerk, who remonstrated against the warmth with which March had met Johnson's thrust with thrust, "What else was I to do? Because the man loves soiled linen, must my ruffles be insulted? Johnson is a hypocrite; he pretends to independence, when there is no greater truckler than he in England. He assumes the moral; yet it was but the other day when—you should know who escorted the lady—he gushed over the Bouffler, who visited him in his den.

He is in clumsy raptures over the mistress of the Prince di Conti, because, adding a bent for literature to a bent for immodesty, she pays our grumbling bear a visit. You told me yourself how he clattered down-stairs to her coach, wig on wrong and raiment all unbuttoned and unbuckled. The man is an impostor, and cheats even himself. To his own mind, he is a highly moral fellow. Consenting to what most folks admit, that I'm the wickedest man in Britain, still I would wager that I meet death more steadily than does he."

And March was right. Twenty-one years later, Johnson, pale, and with the sweat of terror damp on his forehead, yielded his life; the day before, in a frenzy of fear, attempting to stab himself with a pair of shears, being in that extremity of apprehension when the victim rushes on the destruction that affrights him. March, forty-eight years following his tilt with Johnson in the Cheshire Cheese, met his end; and the day of his death was as every day of his life—a day of calmness, cynicism and smiling gentility, with regrets for nothing and reproaches for none.

VI

It was evening. Drury Lane Theatre was thronged, and the crowd in the pit buzzed angrily, like a colony of wasps. The Rena, safe in her box, the color high in her dark cheek, was exhilarated with the suppressed uproar. Across from her the waxen-faced, slim Fitzpatrick was posted, ready to head the campaign of the night. By his side was Burke, a haberdasher, whose grievance was that Garrick no longer bought of him. March, Beauclerk, Williams and Selwyn were well to the rear, where they might see and enjoy and have everything before them. Johnson was in the pit, well down toward the "spikes." Back of the animated Rena towered the prize-fighter, Jack Slack, covering the lady with a cool eye of guardianship, three or four of

his big-fisted butcher lads of Chandos street about him.

"The orders of 'is lordship," observed Slack to one of his satellites, "is to carry out the lady the moment trouble sets in; an' from w'at I 'ears an' sees of them coves in the pit, I don't think as 'ow we 'as long to wait."

"But suppose 'er ladyship wants to see the ruction out?" considered the satellite.

"The lady 'as no say," asserted Slack. "'Is lordship says, 'e does, 'Use your judgment, Jack Slack, an' take 'er out direckly, knockin' down w'atever blokes is 'andy to your reach, to ockepy 'er mind like.' Them's 'is lordship's very orders."

There was a crash of music; the orchestra had begun the overture. At the sound the pit began to shout and make an uproar, one calling to another, clubs flourishing, the spirit of riot commencing to swell. There is nothing the mob likes better than violence with safety.

A burly fellow stood over the leader of the orchestra, menacing him with a cudgel, demanding that he play "Britons, Strike Home." The leader, not being a hero and loving his bones, complied. The pit sang, or rather howled, to the accompaniment of the orchestra.

The music ceased; in the midst of hoots and yells and deafening noise the curtain went up. "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" was the bill. Holland came on to speak a prologue. He was cursed and clamored at, and one or two clubs were thrown at him. A cudgel struck him across the breast; at that he left the stage.

The ruffian who had captured the leader of the fiddles smote with his bludgeon on that official's desk, and commanded "The Roast Beef of Old England." While the music proceeded, somewhat out of tune and time—for there was much nervousness among the musicians—several of the pit resumed the breaking and smashing of such furniture as had survived the riot of the night before. Those not actively engaged in the

war looked on from stall or box approvingly.

March, elated at Garrick's punishment, left his three friends and hastened round to Fitzpatrick's box, the better to counsel that person in his duties as mob-leader.

In her place the Rena, in a tingle of delight and carried away by the tumult, was standing in the very front, augmenting the uproar with shrill cries and pretty profanities, and urging on destruction. To what heights the Rena's enthusiasm would have lifted her will never be known. In the midst of her joy she was caught up like a child in the giant arms of Slack, who, with no more of explanation than the remark, "'Is lordship's orders!" began bearing her away. The Rena spat like a cat, swore like a bargeman, and clawed the tough features of the fighter. Her objections were unheeded. She was whisked off and chaired to her door in Cleveland Court, hearing and seeing no further of that night's proceedings in Drury Lane. March beheld her as she was borne away, and the spectacle pleased him, as it left him more free to the double enterprise of injuring Garrick and seeking the pretty Bride.

The orchestra straggled and staggered noisily to the final notes of "England's Roast Beef." The din and turbulence of the pit were in no wise abated. Fitzpatrick, cold, with his thin, bloodless face, stood up and raised his hand for silence. There was a half-lull in the storm.

"We were last night insulted by Moody, the Irish comedian," shouted Fitzpatrick. "This Moody assaulted a gentleman who had paid at the door as a spectator of the performance. We demand that the creature Moody appear and apologize to an insulted public for his ruffianly conduct of last evening."

Garrick, in a tremble of terror just off the stage in the wings, urged Moody to obey the howl of the public. Moody demurred. His last night's guilt consisted in nothing beyond knocking down an incendiary and

stepping on the candle wherewith he was about to burn the theatre. At last, pushed by the white-faced Garrick, Moody went on. He was met by a shout of derision.

"Apologize to the public you've insulted, you rogue!" commanded Fitzpatrick.

"Why, then," said Moody, with his most comic Irish leer, "I'm sorry I saved the lives of you last night."

"Get down on your knees! Down on your knees, scoundrel!" howled a dozen in the pit.

"I'll see you damned first!" retorted Moody, and walked off the stage.

"Garrick! Garrick!" shouted the burly party with the bludgeon—the person who had control of the music. "Garrick! Garrick!" yelled two hundred voices, taking up the name.

There was nothing else for it. Shaking in every joint, his face pallid, horror in his eye, Garrick appeared. There were a few cheers from such as Johnson, whose age made him safe and whose anger gave him courage. The cheers were buried beneath an avalanche of hissing disapprobation. Garrick nerved himself and attempted to speak. Fitzpatrick, his hated foe

and critic, interrupted him, March at his elbow giving him suggestions.

"Will you or will you not," demanded Fitzpatrick, "restore the old charges of last year?"

Again Garrick essayed to speak, and again the mob drowned his voice.

"Answer—yes or no?" commanded Fitzpatrick.

"Yes!" screamed Garrick, in a final agony, his face working.

The next morning the paper in which Garrick had an interest announced:

Messrs. Garrick & Lacy, of the management of Drury Lane Theatre, at the earnest request of countless patrons of the house, and believing it to be but justice to that public which they hereby thank for numerous favors, have decided to restore the charges of last year.

"Davy has a timid heart," said Johnson to Goldsmith, as they read and discussed the announcement over a bottle at the Cheshire Cheese; "Davy is a coward. And yet," concluded the philosopher, after a pause, "what we call courage, in at least one-half of its expression, is only a phase of imbecility."



ON TYBURN HILL

ON Tyburn Hill, on hanging day,
Cutthroat and thief and gallant stay;
Noble and dandy, sober cit,
Mercer and draper, fop and wit,
And chattering belle in fine array.

My Lady's coach obstructs the way—
Gilt Cupids on its panels flit,
And languishing doth Beauty sit
On Tyburn Hill.

"A highwayman is hanged," they say.
My Lady smiles. "'Tis like a play."
"Lud! Lud! A proper man and fit."
"'Tis hoped he'll make a fight of it."
These be the passing prayers men pray
On Tyburn Hill.

MC CREA PICKERING.

SINFUL SARA

By Elizabeth Duer

THE place was Mrs. Lansing's well-ordered country seat and the time early May—for always since she had had the power to command circumstances her household regulations had been inflexibly enforced, and the first of May was the time to forswear the town. It was not to enjoy the delights of flowering trees and the marvelous greens of the early grass, nor the rare treat of seeing a Baltimore oriole in the peach tree near the garden wall which caused the exodus; it was because she always *had* moved on the first of May, because her cedar closet was in the country house, and the furs and woollens were always stored *there* for the Summer, and because during the early years of her stormy married life the late Mr. Lansing had found his visits to the various racing tracks more difficult of access from the seclusion of Denewood. The wifely endeavor, however, to straighten the zigzags of moral obliquity had proved futile, and of all the vices that dissipation is heir to Mrs. Lansing most hated gambling. The betting of money on fortune's wheel—no matter how turned, whether by horses or cards or dice—was what, in her opinion, started the votary on his course to the bottomless pit. Mr. Lansing had heard her opinion, and died.

The carriage that brought Sara Lansing from the railway station to Denewood had orders to wait, so a very smart footman informed the coachman when he ran down the piazza steps to receive such of Miss Lansing's hand-luggage as might overtax the strength of a lackadaisi-

cal lady's maid. Miss Lansing herself was blooming, and bore no trace of fifteen hours' railway traveling. Her black hair waved crisply from her low forehead and curled in tendrils on the nape of her neck, and her clothes set smartly on her slim young figure.

"Hello, mamma!" she cried, by way of salutation to a middle-aged lady who emerged from the front door. "I had half-expected you to meet me at the station."

Mrs. Lansing gave her daughter a perfunctory kiss. "There was room only for you and your maid in the victoria," she said, coldly. "The modern young lady needs her maid more than she needs her mother."

"Don't be grumpy, mamma," said the girl, with an attempt at fun. "Aren't you glad to see your only child after a two months' absence?"

"I am sorry to be going out just as you arrive," the elder lady returned, with some graciousness. "Drive to the Young Women's Temperance Club rooms, Balch."

Sara stood watching the figure that so amply filled the seat of the vanishing victoria. Prosperity hung round it like an aureola, while a nimbus of yellow straw, bearing white ostrich plumes, crowned the square gray head.

Mrs. Lansing was dressed with great care. Her costume stood for every term known to the fashion journals. There were flounces and *entre-deux* and biases and tucks; her skirt rustled with silk and yet clung with the betraying outline of *voile* to her portly hips. She wore immaculate white gloves, a size too large for her

handsome hands, to avoid the pressure of many rings.

"All this gorgeousness for the Young Women's Topsy Association," said Sara, flippantly, as she put her finger on the electric bell to recall the servant. "Are there any letters for me?" she asked when the man appeared.

He believed there were, and quickly presented them on a tray marked "M. V." in characters plain to read. The silver had come from Mrs. Lansing's side of the house, and, after an American fashion once much in vogue, was marked with her maiden initials, as if to exclude the husband from any share in the gift.

Sara gathered up her letters and put a second question.

"Is Mr. Vaughn staying here?" she asked.

The servant answered that he was, but at the moment was superintending the marking of the tennis court. Should he find him for Miss Lansing?

Sara tore off the blank side of an advertisement from her pile of letters and wrote:

DEAR LASNE:

I'm home. Come down to the old place by the brook.

SARA.

Then she despatched the man to find her cousin, while she proceeded leisurely to the place of rendezvous.

As she crossed the lawn she read a letter that she had selected from the accumulation as alone worth attention. A paragraph in it caused her brows to wrinkle and her mouth to droop. It was this:

I must tell you frankly, dear child, that your leaving the party without settling your bridge accounts caused a little comment on the part of those who did not understand how you were situated, so I took the liberty of assuming your debts and paid up everything. I am now your only creditor, so make your mind easy.

Sara put the hand that held the letter behind her back and turned and faced Denewood. One day it must be *hers*, with its capacity for gob-

bling money. One day everything her mother owned must be hers, and yet she was as helpless to pay the price of her folly as the boy who was raking the road under the locusts.

She reached the brook and sat down on the smooth stone that in childish housekeeping had always served her and Lanse as their dinner table. It was a very firm stone, but it did not prevent the feeling that the world was caving in under her feet; that she was a lonely little sinner and a whopping big fool.

Sara looked at the brook with swimming eyes, till suddenly she turned on her own safety valves, and then she and the brook had it between them.

This is how it had happened. Sara had taken a cold in January and had coughed through February, so that when the doctor had ordered her South to escape the March winds Mrs. Lansing gladly accepted an invitation from her old friend, Mrs. Bryce, to take Sara with her own daughter to the White Sulphur Springs. Mrs. Lansing was too busy a person herself to go pleasuring in Midwinter, but she willingly confided her daughter to a person of Mrs. Bryce's well-known principles. She did not appreciate that just as "nice customs curtesy to great kings," so, with other mothers less strong-minded than herself, the most strait-laced principles become weak-kneed when opposed to the pleadings of pleasure-loving daughters. Caroline Bryce, aided and encouraged by Sara, held her mother in the hollow of her hand.

It was during the early days of their Virginia sojourn that a party was formed to go on to Palm Beach, returning to the White Sulphur Springs early in April. Mrs. Bryce's plaintive plea that they were there for rheumatism was demolished by the truthful statement that she alone had rheumatism, and, moreover, had not been asked to join the party. The good lady then hinted in hesitating terms at the rollicking character of the chaperon, but found her

remarks so wounding to the more liberal charity of her daughter and Sara Lansing that she withdrew the impeachment with shame and undertook to write to Mrs. Lansing in regard to Sara.

Days in the Valley of Decision are always awful days, but if somebody else represents the valley and you a poor little wind-tossed tree, the time is fateful indeed. Sara waited her mother's verdict and trembled. Very little pleasure had come her way. She shared in all solid comforts, such as houses and carriages and expensive frocks, but young company and fun for fun's sake—in short, the froth of life—had been rigidly excluded.

Mrs. Bryce's letter must have been a masterpiece. It dealt impartially with Mrs. Texel's projected party and a conference of the Woman's Branch of the United Effort Society that was to meet at St. Augustine to discuss the suppression of lynch law throughout the South, and so bewildering were the meanderings of the two themes that Mrs. Lansing was fully convinced that after addressing the W. B. U. E. S. at St. Augustine, Mrs. Texel would take the little innocents under her charge for a brief view of Palm Beach before she returned from her crusade against mob violence. Not only did Mrs. Lansing say "yes," but she sent Sara a few extra hundreds and told her to keep an account of how she spent her money, for a reckoning would be in order when she returned.

And so had the worldly education of Sara begun. She found that her chaperon, who knit baby blankets on Sunday and played cards for money at other times, and liked her cigarette, was a kind-hearted woman who restrained her tongue from evil speaking, and spent half her income in doing good; that her companions, who belonged to what her mother designated the "fast set," ate and drank and laughed and prayed like other mortals, with no special mission for the corrupting of their fellow beings. While this shake-up of ethical values was puzzling Sara's

conscience she made a reputation as a bridge player. Her success was phenomenal, and in the excitement of triumph she became the rashest of plungers. Her winnings rolled up like a compound interest sum, and it was in the endeavor to get rid of her ill-gotten gains that she found herself involved in the losses she was now lamenting.

Sitting by the brook could not help matters. Its sunny fountains rolled down no golden sands. Sara mopped her eyes and fumbled in the pocket of her coat till she drew out a tiny book. Small as it was it held her fate. "Bridge" was stamped on the outside of the vellum cover, and was surmounted by a cipher of S. L. gloriously intertwined. Inside there were long rows of figures opposite many names well known to the world of fashion, and at the end of those portentous rows a totting up of the whole in Sara's clearest business hand. \$513.50 was the sum her honor called on her to pay, and her assets were \$20.06.

When Sara's tears were at their fullest flood a man's step asserted itself above the babble of the brook, and an astonished voice demanded:

"What's the matter with you?"

The element of womanly sympathy supposed to lurk in all good men was absent in Lansing Vaughn as far as outward expression went. He had known Sara for nineteen years, and moist despair on her part was not unprecedented.

"I'm in great trouble, Lanse," she said. "I'm in debt, and that's all the money I have in the world," and she held out two crumpled ten-dollar notes.

Lanse glanced at her smart costume and the jaunty perch of her traveling hat, and the conviction was borne to him that these effects of charming simplicity might represent a talent that had its price.

"Dressmaker's bill?" he asked, laconically.

She shook her head.

"Was your money stolen from you, Sara?" This in a tone of relief, as if

the solution must be reached. "I remember," he continued, laughing, "how Aunt Maria used to sew money in your corsets when you went away from home, and I didn't know but what some of the darkies might have attached the outfit."

Lanse laughed a merry, boyish laugh. He was five years older than Sara, a newly fledged clergyman waiting to begin his work in the slums of the great town, but as much a boy as when he and his cousin waded in the brook and stole strawberries for their feasts on the stone where Sara was sitting.

She stopped him. "Don't try to think of ways in which a reputable young woman can become—insolvent." The word pleased her. "I lost the money playing cards, and I do not dare to tell my mother."

"I would not have believed it of you, Sara! It was a low-down-Indian-dog trick to play Aunt Maria." The phrase was reminiscent, but Sara understood.

"I don't agree with you," she said, loftily. "Foolish, extravagant, I grant you—even sinful from the clergyman point of view—but it's absurd to call it mean."

"We'll let the clergyman point of view alone, if you please," he said, sharply. "I'm talking to you from the family standpoint. Your mother let you go on this trip, and you were under moral bonds to behave yourself. She hates gambling, and small blame to her!"

"Say it right out!" cried Sara. "Say my father was a gambler and squandered some of her money. I'm sure there is enough left. Mamma needn't complain. For my part I'm very sorry for poor papa. He had his own trials, I'll be bound!"

Lanse looked disgusted.

"That's a nice insinuation for a girl to make against her mother, isn't it?" he asked. "Do you really believe your mother's hatred of gambling grows out of love of money?"

"I know her prejudices are stronger than her love for me, anyhow!" said Sara, doggedly.

Lanse took a turn as far as the shrubberies and back, and conquered his irritation.

"Look here, Sara," he said, "you have spent money that didn't belong to you, you have compromised your good name, you have betrayed your mother's confidence. Now what are you going to do about it?"

"Go to prison, I should think," she answered, miserably, "from the list of crimes you bring against me. Can't you suggest anything? Don't I own anything I can sell?"

He shook his head.

"I should think not," he said.

Sara's anger burned.

"You're a mighty poor father confessor," she sneered. "You can curse the crime and denounce the sinner, but as for any help—I might as well apply to this stone," and she tapped it with her fingers.

Lanse looked really sorry.

"I have advice to give," he said, "only I know it will be disagreeable. Tell your mother the whole truth, and bear what she has to say without resentment—that's for penance, you see!—and if she refuses to help you, tell me."

There was a suggestion of sympathy in the tail of the sentence which softened her.

"It won't do any good," she protested, sadly.

"Then do it for conscience's sake," he urged.

The behests of the solitary masculine power in a family have been dominant from Mordecai down. Sara yielded with a shrug.

"If I perish, I perish," she said. "Go back to your tennis court. I want to think this out."

He left her, but a great tenderness was tugging at his heart-strings. His poor little Sara fighting the battle against self alone!

It was nearly dinner time when Mrs. Lansing returned from her drive. A package wrapped in tissue paper and tied with a pink ribbon was carried from the victoria into the house, but it passed unchallenged by

Sara, who met it in the hall; she was too guilty and miserable to feel curiosity.

While she and Lanse waited in the drawing-room for the announcement of dinner, Sara's listless glance fell on many unfamiliar objects. There were new vases for long-stemmed roses; an old photograph of the Prince of Wales looked royally out of a grand new frame, with a lion and unicorn supporting the kingly crown; there were new silver boxes for stamps, a calendar with red lettering and some charming bits of old china.

"Since when has mamma taken to buying bric-à-brac?" asked Sara.

"Perhaps since the parlormaid developed a knack of nicking," said Lanse, quoting Francis Wilson.

Sara was still examining the different ornaments when her mother joined them. The elder lady looked almost handsome; a youthful pink overspread her cheeks, and her eyes were brilliant with excitement. Her drive had been inspiring.

During dinner she was fairly eloquent about her plans for the new Club House for Working Girls. She wanted her nephew's opinion as to what harmless games of chance might be provided for their amusement, and concluded the discussion by laying down one rule she intended seeing enforced.

"Such things must be locked up on Saturday night, together with the secular library, but on week days girls will be girls—hey, Lanse?"

"And only hypocrites on Sundays," he answered. "Such a small leavening ought not to do much harm."

Her nephew's sarcasms rarely penetrated the armor of her self-righteousness, but she felt he was doing his profession an injustice.

"For shame, Lanse!" she remonstrated. "The servants might think you were in earnest. If at any time you wish to hold a service for the girls you will find the pianola plays twenty-five hymn tunes."

"I haven't found my ministrations very popular with girls, Aunt Maria," he answered, fixing amused eyes on

Sara's face, but seeing the despair of her countenance he whispered, as she passed him, going out of the dining-room:

"Keep up your courage, little girl. I shall wait for you on the piazza."

Three separate times that evening Sara put in a trembling plea to be her own executioner.

"May I have a little talk with you, mamma?"

"Presently, when I have finished this letter."

Then later: "Are you at liberty, mamma?"

"When I have sent orders to the stable about some shoeing."

Sara was an arrant coward; she breathed a sigh of relief at each reprieve.

On her way to bed, however, she found her mother's door half-open, and her mother's voice invited her to come in. The tone was kind; the Presence, wrapped in a purple silk dressing gown majestically regal, was seated at her toilette table.

"What did you wish to talk to me about?" Mrs. Lansing asked, as she removed a silver crown of tightly braided gray hair bodily from her head.

"Accounts, mamma."

"Never mind about returning to me what you have left. You are welcome to keep it, only make good use of your money." This warning was enforced by an extended forefinger.

"There's nothing left!" cried poor Sara. "Worse than nothing! I am five hundred dollars in debt, and I lost the money playing cards!"

If she had been a rattlesnake her mother could not have regarded her with more dislike as she listened to her sorrowful account of past misdeeds.

Mrs. Lansing rose in her wrath and faced her daughter.

"And you have the effrontery to tell me this! Perhaps you expect *me* to pay your gambling debts! Oh, that *was* what you hoped, was it? Well, undeceive yourself. I shall let your friend, Mrs. Texel, know what I think of *her*, and mention that I

trust the humiliation you feel as a swindler and she feels through the loss of her five hundred dollars may be the means of saving two disgraced women from further degradation. Good-night, Sara; I am glad to see your tears. I hope they come from repentance and not from worldly shame."

Not a word escaped her victim. She had promised Lanse to take her punishment like a woman, and she did it, but she flew down-stairs instead of going to bed and went crashing among the piazza chairs in search of her cousin and comfort.

"Oh, Lanse," she cried, "she won't help me! She doesn't care about the disgrace; she only wants to punish me. What shall I do?" and Sara's sobs came thick and fast—but Lanse's arms were round her, and his slim young hands were patting her shoulders as they used to fifteen years ago, when she fled to him for consolation. In those times it was generally a barked shin that caused the outcry, now it was a bruised spirit.

"That's all right, Sally," he said, cheerfully. "We're not so dead broke that we can't raise five hundred dollars. What do you take me for, child—a spendthrift? I've a famous salary that begins next week, and I've something of my own besides. I'll see you through."

"But I don't want to take your money, Lanse. You need it for your poor and to—to live on," cried Sara, with a wail.

"Pooh!" he said, confidently, "I'll borrow it from myself and repay it by some magazine articles. I and my poor will not suffer."

Sara drew a long sigh and wiped her eyes.

"Kiss me, Lanse," she said, meekly.

The young man caught his breath but managed to steady his voice.

"Excuse me, Sara," he said, "but you have been at this work for fifteen years. Making me love you day by day; flouting me one moment, casting yourself upon me the next. If I kiss you to-night I own you for all time."

The dimples were stealing into Sara's cheeks.

"What a desperate alternative!" she said. "Kiss me, Lanse."

The next morning found Lanse speeding to town to sacrifice five hundred dollars of his small patrimony to meet Sara's obligations. A very triumphant, happy Lanse it was, too, with a face so radiant that the conductor who punched his ticket might have guessed the truth if his whole soul had not been absorbed in littering the carpet of his car with little paper rounds that the black porter promptly removed with dust-pan and broom.

The breakfast hour at Denewood was eight o'clock; for no special reason except the discipline that discomfort brings, unless a hymn Mrs. Lansing had learned as a child may have given to early rising in itself a moral worth.

Why should I let my eyelids close,
Or waste my time in bed?

This morning the autocratic mistress of the establishment presided over her meal alone, for Lanse had breakfasted an hour before, and Sara, already in disgrace, had added to her sins by having her coffee in bed.

Her mother bustled wrathfully to the writing table and dashed off a letter that had leaped into her mind ready drafted while she dressed. Rage is often potent in lending wings to the pen.

MY DEAR MRS. TEXEL:

My daughter tells me that while under your charge at Palm Beach she learned to play cards for money, and left your party owing its different members sums amounting to \$500, which you assumed. You have done so at your own risk. I shall never give one cent of my money in the encouragement of sin.

In attempting to exonerate your character my daughter mentioned that you were interested in the Hospital for Fatherless Babies. To prove to you that it is principle, not money, I am concerned for, I enclose you my cheque for \$500 for that object, drawn to the order of the institution.

Believe me to be

Sincerely yours,

MARIA LANSING.

This letter was ready to send to the post-office by nine o'clock, but alas for the deficiencies of even the most exemplary housekeeping, not a postage stamp was to be found in the house! There it lay—an evangel of retributive justice—impotent for the lack of two cents; and worse than that, it never accomplished its scathing work, because, by the time the stamps had reached the house, the writer had experienced a change of heart.

For the moment Mrs. Lansing's thoughts were forced into new channels. The village society for making garments for the soldiers in the Philippines was to meet that morning at Denewood, and was even now approaching its hospitable doors. Two servants were struggling into the drawing-room with a large bare table, and Mrs. Lansing, scissors in hand, was ready to establish herself at its head as chairwoman of the cutting-out committee.

The slight commotion caused by greetings and finding of workbags and thimbles made a few moments' delay, and then Mrs. Lansing laid her hand solemnly on the great roll of blue-and-white cotton cloth awaiting dissection, and asked what was to engage their attention that day. It seemed pajamas were the crying need. One lady whispered that she had heard the soldiers in the hospitals had only nightingales!

Mrs. Lansing's patriotic scissors snipped the air in their longing to remedy the evil.

"Where is the pattern?" she asked, sternly.

It was given: a few wisps of tissue paper held together by a crooked pin impossible to extricate, the whole thing only understandable after careful study of some microscopic directions that required magnifying glasses and the experience of a professional. Mrs. Lansing's mind bent to the task and conquered.

"Who is responsible for this silly pattern?" she asked.

A blushing maiden of forty Summers acknowledged the crime.

"Oh, well, perhaps—" began Mrs. Lansing; she saw extenuating circumstances. "Miss Creel, didn't you know pajamas were in two pieces, a jacket and dr—trousers? Here is only the jacket pattern." And she touched the bell.

A servant appeared.

"Ask the chambermaid to give you a set of Mr. Vaughn's pajamas," she said, and a murmur went round the room. "How fortunate! So far from any shops—just the thing!"

The man returned empty-handed; he was new to the place, and he answered, boldly:

"Hannah says as Mr. Vaughn likes shirts better nor pants in hot weather."

Mrs. Lansing gave the new footman a scathing glance; the afternoon train should return him whence he came. She rose majestically and went upstairs. When she returned she held an ample white garment, made on the twin cylinder expansion pattern, which she said might be *some guide*—and truly it was—a very strange guide indeed. Ask the soldiers in the Philippines!

Work was laid aside at one o'clock and a sumptuous luncheon served. Mrs. Lansing was a liberal woman where an object commanded her respect, and charity was the breath of life to her. It was three o'clock before her guests were disposed of, her toilette refreshed and she herself ready for her afternoon's work. That work took her somewhat far afield, for, as she drove in her favorite victoria, she had time to study a small manual. It was called "Rules for Bridge Whist," and it occupied a solid half-hour of the lady's attention.

"You may come back for me at half-past six," she said to her coachman, as she disappeared into the shady gloom of Mrs. Van Cott's brand new Elizabethan manor.

Lansing Vaughn had spent a busy but futile day. He had found his bank account low, his rents absorbed in necessary repairs, and his only available resource a few shares of railroad stock selling that day for less

than par, and he had bought at 102. His bankers deplored such a sacrifice, and begged him to give the market a few days to recover, offering at the same time to lend him the money.

Lanse declined the loan but agreed to wait, and so he was forced to return to Denewood without that cheque in his breast pocket with which he had hoped to banish the sorrows of his lady-love. Having neglected to order a conveyance to meet him on the arrival of the afternoon train, he found himself at six o'clock standing on the platform of the little station watching the receding wheels of more pre-cautious neighbors. A brisker traveler had secured the solitary fly, and Lanse was forced to begin his three-mile walk through dusty lanes, with the level rays of the setting sun pouring into his eyes.

He had gone about half-way, when on passing Mrs. Van Cott's entrance gates he saw his aunt's victoria just turning in, pursuant to that lady's order to fetch her at half-past six o'clock.

Here was his chance to get a lift home and at the same time to tell Aunt Maria of his wish to marry Sara and his action in regard to her money losses. He sank back on the seat: how luxurious it was! Alas that the rich can only realize their comforts through privation!

The carriage took its stand a few feet beyond the front door, and Lanse, who was leaning back, was not discernible above the folds of the hood.

Two ladies came out and stood talking. The pent-up indignation of one of them was poured out in bubbling effervescence as the hall door closed behind them. "Oh, no," she was saying, defiantly, "indeed, I didn't play with her this afternoon. I told Mrs. Van Cott plainly that I should resign from the club if I were ever forced to play with Mrs. Lansing again. She is the most insulting creature when she is losing, and always takes it out on her partner! The truth is, we are all afraid of her. I know three women who entertained the club last week who kept extra

prizes concealed to give the old lady in case she lost, so as to get her home in good temper."

"I shouldn't think she would like to take what she had not won," returned a second voice, innocent and young.

"Shouldn't you?" continued the first, scornfully. "That's because you don't know her. It is only necessary to say, 'Dear Mrs. Lansing, you would have won that game if it hadn't been for the mistake of your partner, and I think, under the circumstances,' etc. Then you tuck the prize under her arm, and she goes off with the loot without a qualm."

Lanse could hardly believe his ears. Aunt Maria a devotee of bridge! Shocked at Sara for playing for money—greedy for prizes herself! And how sly the old lady had been about it!

A plan of action was quickly formulated in his mind. If he could obtain ocular proof of his aunt's misdoings he felt he could make out a good case for Sara as a claimant for her mother's mercy. He rang the bell, and while he waited stood flicking the dust of the lanes from his boots with an immaculate pocket handkerchief. Men and peacocks seem peculiarly conscious of any pedal imperfection, and the polished shoe has a direct bearing on the status of self-respect.

"Is Mrs. Lansing still here?" he asked.

The servant opined that she was; indeed, there was a-many ladies in the large saloon playin' cards.

"When you get an opportunity let her know that her carriage is here and her nephew, Mr. Vaughn, waiting for her."

The man led the way to the library, promising to give Mrs. Lansing the message when the next interruption should occur in the game.

From his vantage ground Lanse could see through the parted hangings the drawing-room beyond, and in the stillness even hear the exclamations of the players.

Three tables were still going, at one of which his Aunt Maria was seated in state. She had as her part-

ner a pugnacious person called Norris, while their opponents were Mrs. Van Cott and a gentle old lady in a widow's cap. Mrs. Van Cott had just played the dummy hand and captured the final tricks.

"Well, partner," she exclaimed, "we made two odd, which gives us game and rubber. I *am* glad I left it to you. I should have had to make it diamonds, and we never could have gone game. I don't think I missed a trick, do you, Mrs. Lansing?"

Mrs. Lansing was looking like a thunder gust.

"We should have made the odd if only my partner had not blocked me," the autocrat answered, fixing Mrs. Norris with a revengeful eye.

"I didn't block you at all!" cried that spirited lady, nothing daunted.

"You did!" retorted Mrs. Lansing.

"Really, Mrs. Lansing," began her partner, "considering that I have played bridge—" but Mrs. Lansing cut her short.

"Then you should know enough never to block your partner. Don't you *know* that in a trump hand when your partner leads as I did she must hold seven of the suit, and you must discard your top card? Don't you know even that? You must have learned that, I should think!" growling more and more angry.

"I had a good many clubs myself," began Mrs. Norris, trying to keep the peace. "I feared Mrs. Van Cott held the nine instead of you, so I kept the ten—then if you had gone on leading clubs and led me a low one I should have taken it with the ten, returned you the seven, which you could have taken with your nine, and we should have made the odd, as you say; but it was your fault, not mine—don't you think so, Mrs. Van Cott?"

"Oh, don't ask anyone to discuss it further," said Mrs. Lansing, sneeringly. "I know and I saw. I have, as usual, *just* lost owing to—to—bad luck, let us say. I should have left before this last rubber—I was ahead then! But it is always the way; one is over-persuaded to stay, and then loses."

By this time the whole table was found guilty.

Lanse could stand it no longer. The coarseness of Mrs. Lansing's temper, her flushed face and evident excitement were genuinely shocking to him. Pushing aside the curtains he came quickly into the room and made his way to Aunt Maria's chair.

"Your carriage is here," he said, in a low tone. "Let me beg of you to come at once."

"Has anything happened?" she asked in some alarm, his grave face and silent manner beginning to tell.

He reassured her while he helped her to gather up her paraphernalia for driving—sunshade, gloves and feather boa—and had succeeded in getting her as far as the hall when Mrs. Van Cott overtook them.

"Dear Mrs. Lansing," she began, and Lanse felt that he knew, word for word, what was coming, "I am so sorry about that last game! I am sure you would have won if only you had got the lead, so you must let me make over to you the prize. As hostess it is so awkward winning one's own prizes!"

The scowl rolled from the elder lady's brows.

"If you feel in that way," she said, graciously, "I'm sure I am delighted to oblige you. That is my carriage," she said, turning to Mrs. Van Cott's butler, who was staggering under the weight of a large silver mirror. "You may rest it against the front seat, under Balch's legs."

As they drove from the door Lanse gave vent to the indignation that was choking him. In his young judgment there were no modifications in hypocrisy—self-deception had no place.

"Aunt Maria," he burst out, "I joined you this afternoon in order to tell you that I have won Sara's promise to marry me, and to plead her cause with you. I felt then that you had much to forgive in her conduct, but within the last half-hour I have seen you under circumstances that make Sara's faults seem trivial."

"I—circumstances—my conduct

compared to Sara's—you forget yourself, Lansing!"

"I wish it were as simple a matter as my forgetting myself in politeness to you, for then it would be a question between our two selves, but I regret to say it is you who have forgotten yourself, publicly."

"You must be out of your mind!" she responded, highly incensed. "What do you imagine I have done?"

"There is no imagining," he answered. "I have seen you myself quarreling over your cards, taking prizes you have not won, and abusing your neighbors; moreover, this must have been going on for months, yet you have concealed it from your family and affected to be scandalized at poor Sara."

"And so I am scandalized at Sara. To play cards for prizes is an innocent diversion—for money, a deadly sin!"

An angry "Pshaw!" broke from Lanse. "You were gambling just as much as Sara," he insisted. "Prizes or money, where is the difference? Only she never posed as an example; she is sorry for her folly and repentant; she, at least, keeps her temper under provocation."

"And so do I!" almost screamed the old lady, "or I should turn you out of this carriage."

"Perhaps you are right," he said, gently. "I may have said more than my position as your nephew makes becoming. What concerns me is that Sara's belief in your sincerity should be unshaken. I hope no rumor of your card playing will reach her ears."

"And if it does, what business is it of hers, or yours either?" responded Mrs. Lansing, thoroughly roused. "Because the tailor has made you a new clerical coat, is that any excuse for your sitting in judgment on those who are older and wiser than you? When a person of my—ahem!—conscientiousness lends herself to a movement it virtually makes it right—that is, it proves it cannot be wrong."

Lanse had heard of the righteousness that covers as with a garment, but had never before met the self-

righteousness that encases like a coat of mail. When Aunt Maria proclaimed herself greater than the law he felt the futility of further argument. It is hard, however, to acknowledge one's self routed in a good cause, so Lanse tried to secure a retreat by a change of base.

"Aunt Maria," he said, "you are an old woman—" a snort from the victor—"and I stand in a peculiar relation to you as your nephew and future son-in-law! I have only said to your face what others are saying behind your back, but if in the saying I have wounded your feelings I beg your forgiveness. Perhaps, when you come to think the matter over, you may find you do not entirely disagree with me. Won't you shake hands, and may I hope for your consent to my engagement to Sara?"

Mrs. Lansing looked slightly mollified, but she did not yield her hand to the slim brown one waiting to receive it. Perhaps it was safer in the restraint of its fellow lest the owner should be tempted to follow the advice of the Psalms, according to Sternhold and Hopkins in their metrical version:

Now lift thy hand from off thy lap
And give thy foe a rousing slap.

There was a silence of some minutes. They had turned into the gates of Denewood, and the peace of the passing day was on bird and beast and flower. Aunt Maria hardly came under that triple category, but the peace was felt even by her strenuous spirit. She spoke, and all anger had died out of her tone.

"I believe you are a good man, Lansing, according to your lights, and I am willing you should marry Sara. As this ought to be a joyous occasion, I will even go so far as to excuse the inexcusable in her conduct, and give her a cheque to pay Mrs. Texel." She hesitated for a moment and then added: "Perhaps it may be as well not to mention my proficiency as a bridge player; an immature judgment is apt to confound the use with the abuse of a pastime."

They had arrived at the front door, and Mrs. Lansing waved away the footman and rested her descended weight on Lanse's arm, while she added the last word of generous reproach:

"Of course you will expect me to

make you and Sara an allowance, and so I will, but the income must be paid to you, Lansing, because Sara has shown a weakness of character under temptation particularly distressing to a person of my standards."



A YULE SONG

WHO cries 'tis folly to wreathe the bright holly?
 Who is it scoffs at the mistletoe bough?
 Marry, then, out on him! marry, then, flout on him!
 If there's a time to be jolly, 'tis now!

Berry-tide, cherry-tide, each is a merry tide,
 And there's charm in the nutting, I vow!
 But none surpasses—how say you, my lasses?—
 The time for up-hanging the mistletoe bough.

Reason—away with it! Men have grown gray with it,
 Pondering why and considering how;
 We have no part in it—nay, and no heart in it—
 Under the droop of the mistletoe bough!

So, lads, your choices all! Lift, maids, your voices all!
 Love levels prince with the man at the plough.
 We'll make our boast of it, we'll make our toast of it—
 Ne'er may it wither, the mistletoe bough!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



SPEAKING BY THE TIME CARD

"WHAT is the Suburban Handicap?"
 "I don't know, but I do know that it is an awful handicap to live in the suburbs."



VICTORY AT LAST

ESSIE—Did she blush when you told her you knew all?
 BESSIE—Blush! Why, she colored to the roots of her hair.
 ESSIE—Well, that's where she has tried to get the color for years.

UNDER DIFFICULTIES

O^H, 1-lovely one! h-h-hear m-m-m-me
 Is a-a-all I ask;
 I long to b-b-be with thee
 That I may b-b-bask
 Within the w-w-warmth divine
 Of th-th-thy caress.
 W-w-wilt thou be m-m-mine?
 Oh, answer, "Y-y-yes!"

Good thir, alath! I cannot thay
 Thith thing thou athketh me.
 Thtop! lithen! hathten not away!
 The reathon'th plain to thee.
 If I for theven ageth thtrove
 My anthwer to ekthpreth
 To thith the thtory of thy love,
 That anthwer'd thtill be "Yeth!"

ARTHUR CRAWFORD.



IN A STATE OF DECLINE

E^{DITOR}—What makes you say that I ought to buy this joke?
 H^{UMORIST}—I don't believe in carrying a joke too far, and that joke has
 been carried far enough.



WARMING UP

H^{EWITT}—Do you and your wife have any heated discussions?
 J^{EWETT}—Every morning, trying to settle who shall get up and make
 the fire.



UNAVOIDABLE DELAY

"W^{HAT} made you so late?"
 "I came up in my automobile, and passed here three times before
 I could manage to stop."

THE ENCHANTED RUG

By Edgar Saltus

THE beauty of Az Zahra a congress of poets in active collaboration would be impotent to depict. Az Zahra was the palace of the Caliphs of Cordova. Forty thousand men worked at it ceaselessly for forty years. To-day not a trace of its enchantments remains.

There have been other bewilderments almost yet not quite as witching. Nero devised a residence so ineffably charming that on the day of reckoning may it outbalance a few of his sins! About it were shimmering porticos, glittering avenues, green savannahs, forest reaches, the call of bird and deer. Within were domes of sapphire, floors of malachite, crystal columns and red gold walls. It has crumbled.

Before the peacock throne of the Great Mogul there was an inscription that ran: "There is a Paradise. And it is this. And it is this." Of that paradise the legend alone endures. The enticements of Dar Sargenu are rumored to have exceeded those of Eden. They have evaporated. Trumpets of triumph woke Sardanapalus from the splendor of dreams to settings yet more splendid. Like the dreams, the settings have faded. Beneath cyclopean arches, in matchless magnificence, Belsarazzur lounged and laughed. The arches have fallen, the magnificence has gone. At any evocation of Bel's Home of the Height the pens of archæologists have spluttered. Bel has vacated the skies, his earthly tenement has fallen. The sumptuousness in which Semiramis dwelt exceeds the powers of prose. The lady has dwindled

into myth and the sumptuousness with her. Mounting upward with the stream of life and light, the memory of the imperial palace at Byzance surges, a gorgeous vision. By comparison Versailles becomes an eyesore and Windsor a blur.

For sheer loveliness Az Zahra beat all these places hollow. It was a fairyland that would have thrown the architects of the Great Mogul's peacock paradise into stupors of admiration. Beside it Nero's surprising construction would have looked quite squalid. If a surmise be worth a line of type, we may assume that even the gorgeous vision of Byzance would have slunk from it outdazzled. And there, one day, or it may be one night, a Caliph stood and smiled.

Well he might. Before him was one of those jasmines in flesh and blood which used to grow on the Guadalquivir. And smiling, he lassoed the girl again and again with rope after rope of pearl. But even in fairyland, even in Az Zahra, Caliphs had counselors. This prince had his. They were prudent persons, and they represented to him that the lassoing was too lavish. These representations the Caliph treated as cobwebs. "You are just like everyone else," he remonstrated; "you put a lot of value on things that have none." Then he mused a moment. "Tell me," he continued, "what are pearls good for except to punctuate the prettiness of a pretty girl?"

The syllogism, propounded in unanswerable Arabic, the counselors were insufficiently casuistic to refute. Moreover, they were perhaps struck

by the profundity of the truth it contained. The pearl is sacred to prettiness. Personally we prefer the opal. The opal is a pearl with a soul. But opals are not *jeune-fillesque*. The pearl is. Vishnu could find nothing better for his daughter. Cæsar ransacked Britannia to find enough for the long line of young women whom he had on his list. Nero was less thoughtful. He used to toss them—the pearls, not the young women—about the room. Heliogabalus liked them best powdered into pepper. Cleopatra preferred hers in a cocktail.

The possibility of that entirely vulgar performance has been doubted. But the dissolution of a pearl can be effected, though the flavor is reported to be less appetizing than vermouth. And naturally. The pearl is a disease. A mortal one, too, in this respect, that it dies. It is the only jewel that does die. Diamonds, for instance, live forever. One might say they have always lived. They count, like light, among the first created things. Generated in flame before the earth was cool, they preceded the primal monera. Pearls, on the other hand, are charming accidents, and, parenthetically, the only ornament that nowadays a man can decently wear.

Balzac understood that fact very thoroughly. Previously, Buckingham had dripped jewels in a promenade through the Louvre. Previously, too, Richelieu had dazzled Vienna with a satrap's suite. Previously, as well, *les grands seigneurs* made themselves multi-colored as quetzals. Adornment had been the fashion. But in Balzac's day fashion had changed. It was much simpler, yet not entirely severe. Then it so fell about that one evening Balzac appeared at the opera with a stick of which the handle blazed with gems. The glare of it drew the attention of the entire house. It was barbaric. It was more—it was unique. It was something else, too. It was a lesson. Apart from the stick Balzac was not adorned. The other men present

were. On the morrow they stripped the jewels from their fingers and the trinkets from their shirts. Anteriorly gentlemen had been known by their costume; since then they have been known by their speech. That is quite as it should be, were it not that in speech, as in dress, they have, in forcing the note, become entirely lack-lustre. There is modern progress.

We have not a word against it. But if our summary has been serviceable it will have shown that splendor has departed. This we regret. We prefer silk to flannels, velvet to tweed. Had fortune sufficiently favored us we would wade in jewels. We see nothing distressing in Buckingham's promenade through the Louvre. Were we able we would eclipse Richelieu's entry to Vienna. Merely for the manner in which Nero lodged himself we forgive every crime he committed. Sardanapalus is our patron saint. It may be—though we doubt it—that he was wickeder than Heliogabalus; but what of it? He was magnificence made man. Byzance is rumored to have been the sewer of every sin, yet such was its beauty that it is the canker of our heart that we could not have lived there. By way of compensation we are treated to certain conveniences and equally certain ugliness. Cities grow less uncomfortable and more hideous day by day. We live in a land of ready made clothes, in an epoch that cant has sterilized and snobbery debauched. The stage is as mediocre as life. Even the Muse has fled. In lieu of the glare of genius there are antiseptic preparations, and automobiles instead of art. Only in Nature and the convulsions of her does splendor endure.

Nature, though convulsive, is curiously cautious. She possesses a sort of stock in trade of which her supply is uniform. That stock is energy. She transforms it, transmutes it and transposes it. But never does she suffer a speck of it to get away. She may store it in microbe or man, in

sporules or stars, but on to it all she holds very tight.

These premises accepted, it follows that if splendor has vacated this neighborhood it must be somewhere else. The pity is we cannot stalk it. And yet, why not? In the Arabian Nights there is a story about an enchanted rug. You had but to get on it, and presto! it carried you where-soever you willed. That rug has been regarded as fabulous. It was perhaps woven of the imagination, but imagination can do as well to-day. All it needs is a foothold. Lacking that, a footnote. Here is one about Mars. It says that we can see the canals there, and sooner or later we shall see the streets.

Seeing is one thing, hearing is another. But recent experiments have induced the idea that we shall not merely see the streets, but talk with the citizens. The idea may seem fantastic, yet it is the charm of certain ideas that beginning as fancies they end as facts. In this instance, the idea is to telephone along a shaft of light. That is simple enough. Sound that can be projected a mile can be projected a million miles. It can be projected to the ends of space, if ends there are. Assuming, then, the possibility of such projection, and there is the enchanted rug.

On it we may proceed after splendor, and presently we shall stalk it, too. Mars is many a kalpa our senior. In science and sapience, manners and modes she is, as such, in a position to give us points. There must be forces she has mastered of which we know nothing. Senses she has cultivated of which we are unaware, problems she has solved which to us are mysteries, and with them refinements and ideals unimagined here.

Granting, then, the possibility of communication, and there would be not merely the pleasure but the profit of learning from her pundits the history of time, of receiving from her erudites the charts of space and of flirting through the telescope with her pretty little girls. And who

knows but that in putting two heads, or rather two worlds, together, interplanetary communication may result in interplanetary trips, that we shall visit Mars, that the Martians will visit us, that there will be transsidereal elopements, marriages, divorces and, in their triple train, romances and tragedies such as no local mortal ever dared to dream before.

That possibility, however suggestive, is trivial beside another it evokes. Mars, though our senior, is an inferior planet. The superiority of planets and of their inhabitants is in direct proportion to their distance from the sun.

In accordance with this proposition—which all self-respecting novelists have adopted—the inhabitants of Mercury may be represented as human hyenas, those of Venus are commonplace brutes, the inhabitants of this world are uninteresting prisoners, those of Mars interesting poets, while the denizens of the distant spheres possess attributes of increasing perfection and enjoy conditions of supernal delight.

If then we, in our inferiority, are once able to ring up Mars, it will be found that long since Mars has been able to connect with Jupiter, the latter with Saturn and so on to the Post-mortem; and there is the circuit complete. Given, then, communication, and the romances and tragedies that may result sink into nothingness beside the opulence to be.

We shall know then, not merely where our early splendor has gone, but what splendor really is. Everything being possible, we may discover that it consists not in the manipulation of magnificence, the multiplication of masterpieces, the sumptuousness of settings, the thrones and diadems of the elect, but in the spectacle of other worlds and the junkets we shall take there.

This idea has a false appearance of originality which we hasten to disclaim. It is old as the Sphinx. It is older. We know to-day that that monstrous curiosity was disinterred ages ago from beneath masses of sand

under which it must have brooded interminably. But the meaning of it was so clear that Egypt adopted it for a crest. The claws of a reptile, the wings of a bird, the body of a beast, a human head, and there, before Darwin, before history, by a civilization that has left no other souvenir, in traits great and grave the descent of man was told.

There remained his ascent. Above the Sphinx Egypt sent circling the Phoenix. The one expounded the mystery of life, the other the secret of death. That secret is reincarnation. "Shall I believe in it?" a youngster asked Voltaire. "Believe in it?" the ogre shouted, "believe in it by all means. There is nothing more poetic." Nor is there. It has a defect, however. It explains everything. It explains why some of us are rich and some are poor, why some are smart and many are not. It explains the reason of joys and sorrows, the cause of smiles and tears. It explains these things, others, too, and very simply, on the ground that this life, which is the refuse of many deaths, has acquired merits and demerits in accordance with which are punishments and rewards. It explains everything so fully that it leaves you nothing to do but to bore yourself to extinction. That is its defect. Here is its charm. It sends the reincarnated junketing to spheres where life is larger than it can be here. It does more. In weaving a garland of migrations that stretches throughout the universe it sows our seed in every world and marries our memoirs with that of the sky.

There is the enchanted rug again, and therewith a quality of splendor so resplendent that beside it the witcheries of Az Zahra are reduced to mud pies. The main difficulty about it consists in the obvious fact that it is all too devilish good to be true. Any entertainment of it is comparable only to fancying that an uncle whom you never had has left you a billion he never possessed. Dreams are exhilarating but not exact.

Yet if splendor be not stalkable in other spheres it is not to be quarried here. This world has done with it. It is one of the platitudes of philosophy that history repeats itself; history does nothing of the kind. The one deduction deducible from its divagations proves that nothing is constant but change.

In the change of things the world has deteriorated. Artistically it is bankrupt. Ethically it is nothing to boast of. Ambitions have veered, tendencies altered. Heredity, environment—the influence of snobbery and its sister, cant—have modified manners and sugared speech. But appetites have been left unaffected. Eliminate the penal code and we should be assisting now at the frank freedom the past beheld—with the difference that the settings would be less sumptuous and the architecture more trite. In but one thing has the world improved. One is a great many. Scientifically there has been a quintuple discount on everything that was. There is no telling how far science may advance nor yet into what wonderlands its enchanted rug may take us. In order, then, that we may not seem to know more than we do we will not attempt to prophesy. Besides, there is an old adage that the future sits in the lap of the gods. Or does it not lie there? As often as not it has promised most falsely.

It may be, therefore, that science, on which we all count so much, may turn and cheat us. It may be that our most intoxicating dreams, reincarnation and interstellar trips, will be recognized as delirium. But if our proposition be sound, and nothing is constant but change, then from the coil of things other perspectives will beckon. Said Baudelaire: "*Pour trouver du nouveau plongeons dans le néant.*" The rug is more convenient. Borne on its arabesques, a condition of affairs is disclosed in which love will be regarded as a disease; wealth as a disaster; beauty as a horror; genius as stupidity; magnificence, madness and originality, vulgar. It

will be wicked to be witty; righteous to be dull. The aim of life will be the attainment of complete colorlessness, and the ideal entire nullity.

The perspective may seem remote. From our rug it looks very neighborly. The sun of splendor set long since. The dawn of nullity is breaking.

Salvation, if salvation there be, lies solely in extraneous succor. Precisely as dynasties are rejuvenated by fresher blood, so may humanity yet be reclaimed by superterrestrial conceptions. On the possibility of these conceptions we have already touched, yet theoretically, merely, for the sake of their dreamlike beauty. To their support Mr. Tesla not long since brought something more substantial. He brought a fact. Mr. Tesla announced that he had been favored with a message from another sphere. Personally we did not presume to doubt him. But his brother scientists assumed an attitude of incredulity more or less impolite. That

was to be expected. In the announcement of any novelty there is something curiously insulting to those laboring in the vineyards where that novelty, or the announcement of it, appears.

Yet we need not bother over that. Since Mr. Tesla has received a message there is no reason why he should not reply, no reason either why communication should not result, nor yet why we should not learn what fashions are in vogue in the upper circles of the universe, and what customs the smart sets of the best planets observe. Thereupon society, being innately snobbish, will proceed to follow suit, the dawn of nullity will break to pieces, and an era of such general gorgeousness ensue as shall make Sardanapalus hide his diminished ghost. In short, even in the limits of this paper there are no limits to the joys in store—provided, of course, that the message to Mr. Tesla did not reach him when journeying on an enchanted rug.



THE SEA

INSATIATE miser, lifting eager hands
For tribute from all peoples and all lands,
Thy locks are gray with years and avarice,
But placid to all other joy than this,
Thou laughest like a demon in his glee,
Thy hoard secreting where no eyes may see.

ALBERT GAINES.



POINTED DIRECTIONS

MERRITT—A man shouldn't bother a woman by talking business.
CORA—That's right, dear. If you mean business, go talk to papa.



THE divorced half doesn't know how the other half lives.

SALAAM: NEW YEAR'S

TO-DAY I touch my forehead, lips and heart—
 The ancient token
 That in my every thought you bear a part,
 Silent or spoken.

May Fortune pay you honor at her court,
 Nor stint her measure;
 May all your ships come safely into port,
 Laden with treasure.

Sorrow be far from where your lines are cast,
 Tearless your laughter;
 True joys be yours, both now and at the last,
 Here and hereafter.

So shall you mark, unshadowed by regret,
 Time's yearly warning;
 As one whose feet are resolutely set
 Straight for the morning.

C. E. JOHNSTONE.



DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS

CITY CHAP (*wrathfully*)—Look here! When I told you I wanted a family horse I meant one that any member of the family could drive anywhere in perfect safety, and you sold me an untamed demon that promptly ran away and tore things up like a cyclone!

COUNTRY CHAP (*cheerily*)—Wa-al, you ort to have specified a little more clearly, Mr. Easysmith; I conscientiously warranted him to be a family horse b'cuz I knew it would take the whole family to hold him if he got it into his head to run away.



THE MODERN TEST

MRS. GRAMERCY—What do you consider being shabby-genteel?
 MRS. PARK—When you are able to keep a carriage but can't afford a horseless one.



“I DIDN'T know myself till I met you,” said Modesty to Knowledge.

GIOVANNI

By Frederick Chester

DON JUAN finished his nap on the Louis Quinze chair in the corner—alas! most of his sleep is obtained in the daytime—and strolled across the studio to where I was lying on the divan with a pipe and a *Journal Amusant*.

"Come up," said I, and with the accuracy of habit he leaped to my chest and sat there yawning. He is an exceedingly handsome fellow, though I should not dream of saying so in his presence. He is very, very black, save for a white star on his forehead, a white breast and four white feet. His ruff is truly wonderful and his tail is a waving plume.

"You seem *distrain*," said I, anxiously; "cast down, as it were. I trust nothing is the matter"—for I had been rubbing his cheeks as he loves them rubbed, and there was no response. Commonly, when Don Juan's cheeks are stroked a purr is evoked amazing beyond speech, a smothered roar, a subterranean rumble like a railway train in a tunnel.

"*La femme! la femme! cherchez la femme!*" said Don Juan, with a sigh. "Only," he added, bitterly, "you won't find her. A—a beast of a woman is keeping her shut up."

"Oh, cruel!" said I; "but, Giovanni, isn't this—er—affair something new? You hadn't told me that you were involved in—in anything really serious."

"Is it your custom," inquired Don Juan, haughtily, "to kiss and tell? No gentleman will do that. But any gentleman may, in adversity, unbosom himself to a friend—in whom he has confidence," he added, flatteringly.

63

I murmured that he did me an honor.

"She wasn't out last evening at all," he continued, sighing again. "I thought I caught a glimpse of her at the window, but that's small satisfaction. Curse that woman!"

"Curse the woman, indeed!" said I, with sympathy. "Is—is she—Naturally she is beautiful—not the woman, of course!"

"Naturally," said Giovanni, with complaisance. "She is auburn," he proceeded, sentimentally. "A wonderful Titian red—I've seen sunsets like her!" He closed his eyes and purred a little. "And her eyes—ah, they're like the blue glass in those spectacles the *concièrge* wears sometimes, and her—her bosom is the softest, silkiest white in the world!"

"You poor old chap!" said I, grasping his paw. "I know just how you feel. Isn't there something I can do? To think of you deprived of—of all that! It's brutal! Who is the fiend that keeps her shut in?"

"One of the women across the court," said Giovanni, sadly. "She thought we made a—a noise. She has no soul for harmony."

"No, no, of course not," said I, wincing a bit, reminiscently. "But what one of the women across the court is the brute? The Russian with the yellow hair and the—the calculating eye? No?"

"No," said Giovanni, "the Russian isn't a bad lot. She gave me milk one day. It's the one in the studio under hers, the little one that sings. At least I'm told the noise she makes is meant for singing."

Really, you know, she has no register. You should hear my Titian red——"

"You—you don't mean," said I, "Mademoiselle Élise?"

"Precisely!" replied Giovanni. "That is just the one I mean. Mademoiselle Élise. What of it?"

"Oh, come now," said I, "you're making some awful mistake. You'll have to take back the names you've been calling her, really you will. I—I can't allow it. Mademoiselle Élise is a—a lady whom I—respect very highly."

Giovanni looked argumentative.

"And as for her singing," I continued, "she has the most beautiful voice that God ever saved from a lost violin. A voice to make you pray, Giovanni, to turn your laughter to tears, to turn your tears to laughter. A voice to shake the heart in you till it is ready to burst for longing and pain and passion, and then to soothe its throbbing and to heal its pain with the sweetest, strangest balm in the world. Ah, I've heard her sing, Giovanni!"

Giovanni was so rude as to yawn.

"Yes, yes, I dare say," said he, "though, as I was telling you, you should hear my Titian— However, that's not the question. The fact remains that this person is withholding the object of my—my esteem from my eager arms. Ah, if you knew her as well as I you would know how false she is. I used to think her worthy of any man's love. She—she used to give me sweets and milk. She fondled me, petted me, told me that my—my appearance was impressive——" here Don Juan struck something of an attitude—"but," he continued, gloomily, "it all ended when La Rousse arrived a week ago. I might mention that La Rousse is the name of my—adored one. She has no smiles for me now, no—no milk or sweets—no pleasant word. Why," he cried, fiercely, "if La Rousse—heaven bless her!—had not managed to escape by an open window the first two or three evenings, I never should have met her at all. Now the window is closed!"

Giovanni bowed his head in manly grief.

"Good old chap!" said I, stroking the downcast head; "poor old chap! The Lord isn't treating you very well, is He?"

"The Lord?" sniffed Giovanni, "the Lord has nothing to do with it; it's that—that——"

"Lady," said I, gently.

Giovanni swished his tail.

"Your troubles are heavy, Johnnie," said I, "but mine are heavier. Let's shake hands, old chap. After all, the girl you love is only behind bars. Some day, John, the bars will be left down, the window will be open. Cheer up, there's hope for you, but none for me. There's more than bars between the girl I love and me. Why, she doesn't even know I love her. She passes me on the street with her little chin in the air. Ah, no hope for me—for between us, Johnnie, there's a great gulf fixed," and I turned my head that I might look out through the long open window, out across the sun-bathed court to a window opposite where a little row of potted geraniums gleamed scarlet on the ledge. "A great gulf fixed, and I'm no Cæsar to bridge it."

But Giovanni's mind was on his own troubles.

"There's just one consolation in it all," said he, vindictively; "the lady——" he placed a certain unpleasant stress on the word—"the lady who is treating my La Rousse so cruelly is as unhappy as we can be."

"Unhappy, John?" said I, very quickly, "Mademoiselle Élise unhappy? What do you mean? How is she unhappy?"

"Oh, it's some man," said Giovanni, wearily; "she used to talk about it before—before everything was changed, a week ago."

"Yes, yes!" I cried, pulling Giovanni's ruff to hold his wandering attention; "but what man, what man, Johnnie? Curse it all, don't you see that this is important? What man is she unhappy about, and why is she unhappy? Has he—has somebody

treated her badly? Ah, Giovanni, but if he has there will be murder done in Paris town!"

"Stop pulling my ruff!" snarled Giovanni, and proceeded indignantly to lick the ruffled hairs into place. "And how the deuce should I know what man she was wailing about? She never told me his name—no, I think no one had been ill-treating her. I fancy she'd just fallen in love with someone who didn't care for her."

"Oh, nonsense!" said I.

Don Juan continued licking his silky sides.

"I fancy it was some man here in the court," he said, presently. My heart gave a great throb and then stood still, quite still, for as long as a heart may. Some man in the court! Why—why it might be—Ah, but that was impossible!

"Some man in the court?" said I, in a little whisper, "some man in this court?"

"I always fancied, do you know," observed Don Giovanni, examining a white forepaw, "that it was that Pole Leczinski, the chap with the pointed beard and the wide eyes."

"Oh, nonsense!" said I again.

"As you like," sniffed Giovanni; "it isn't worth discussing, anyhow," and he made as if to jump to the floor. But I seized him firmly and held him.

"Tell me all you know," I cried; "tell me everything you heard Mademoiselle Élise say about this—this man, or by Jove, I'll cut off your milk and bones!"

"Leggo!" growled Giovanni, "you're hurting me; leggo! I'll tell you all I know, though on my word, I can't fancy why you're so keen over it. How the deuce do you expect me to remember all she said, anyhow?" he cried, irritably, "I'm no phonograph! It was just little things now and then—I'd stroll into her room—it's a little room with not much more than a piano and a couch in it, and some flowers. I'd stroll in of an afternoon, to—to pass the time of day, and perhaps lap a spoonful of milk," this with a disin-

terested and casual air, "and she'd be sitting by the window behind those red geraniums staring across the court."

"Where," said I, trying to seem indifferent, "where would she be staring, John?"

"Oh, over this way," said Giovanni. "The Pole lives just under us, you know."

"Hang the Pole!" said I, heartily.

"And she'd say: '*Tiens! c'est toi p'tit chat noir?*' She always called me '*chat noir*,'" he explained. "I told her what my name is, but she didn't listen—women are a stupid lot! Then she'd bring out the milk or a bit of cake, a *baba* or a *savarin*—I'm partial to *savarins*—and while I was busy with it she'd go over to the piano and play some horrible little soft, never-ending thing that always made me want to—to yowl. I can't bear that sort of music! And while she played she'd talk. '*Ah, mon chat noir!*' she'd say, 'I saw him again today. Twice I saw him, once coming out of the Impasse and once down in the Rue de Rennes. Ah, he's so splendid, *chat noir!* big and brave and tender—I know he is brave and tender. I can read as much in his eyes! Ah, *chat noir*, *p'tit chat noir*, will he ever be brave for me, and tender to me? Will he ever know that a poor little humble little girl loves him, watches for his face at the window, listens for his step on the stones? How her silly little heart beats at that step of his, *chat noir!*' And then," proceeded Giovanni, "she'd play a lot more, with her head down over the keys. 'Is it dreadful, *petit?*' she'd ask, sometimes, when I was sitting in her lap and it was growing dusk outside. 'Is it so dreadful to love a man who doesn't love me? It's unmaidenly, unwomanly, isn't it, *chat noir?* I've never spoken to him nor he to me, but, oh, I love him, little cat.' And then," continued Don Juan, rather shamefaced, "then she'd hug me up close to her and put her face to my ruff and whisper in my ear—oh, all sorts of nonsense. 'Sometimes,' she'd whisper, 'ah, sometimes I've

dreams, *chat noir*, mad dreams of us together, of him and of me! I dream that he's come to love me at last—*quelle folie!* Ah, the thought of it, the joy of it, turns me faint! How shall I make him love me, little cat? How shall I make him know that I—care? I've sung to him, across the court, of Spring evenings when all the air was full of the lilacs and the chestnuts—I've sung out all my heart to him, but perhaps he didn't care. Do you think he didn't care? Still, once, ah, one beautiful time, I was leaning out of the window—it was night and quite dark—and I sang a verse of a little old *chanson* that comes from the South, and he—he sang the next verse, very low, *à demi voix*. How I trembled there in the dark, *chat noir!* Ah, will he ever come to me? Will he ever care? And," concluded Don Giovanni, yawning cavernously, "there was a great deal more of the same thing. Every day there was a lot of it. It became a great bore. What am I going to have for dinner to-night?"

I put Don Juan from me gently and went over to the long open window with a great throbbing at my temples, a great surging in my breast.

The sunlight that bathed the square court had gone and the dusk was gathering. At the window across the way the geraniums gleamed a dull scarlet line, and the little white curtains swayed in the breeze behind them. From beyond the curtains came the slow, soft tones of a piano.

"Giovanni," said I, turning back into the room, and paused a moment to steady my voice, "I'm going out for five minutes. Please wait here for me. There is something that I shall want you to do when I return."

I hurried out of the little Impasse and around the corner to the florist's in the Avenue du Maine. In five minutes I was back in the studio with a single pink rose, a great fresh rose just bursting into flower.

"Giovanni," said I, gently, "you are going to take this across the court for me to Mademoiselle Élise. It is a—message. She will understand."

"I won't!" said Giovanni, stubbornly. "She has ill-treated me, and besides, it would look so ridiculous! Fancy me frisking about the court down there with a rose!"

I fixed him with a determined eye.

"What am I going to get for it?" said he at last, in a very sullen tone.

I had a sudden inspiration.

"La Rousse," said I, simply. "I think I can manage it for you."

"I will go," said Giovanni, and fairly trembled with eagerness.

I stood a moment at the open window holding my great pink rose, and Giovanni stood beside me. There was a moving gleam of something behind the geraniums across the way. I kissed the rose and fastened it to Giovanni's collar. A moment later I saw him traverse the court; at least, I saw a curious streak of black and white and pink. It might have been a cat bearing a rose.

The evening was still, very still, but its quiet was suddenly broken by a cry from the room behind the geraniums. A little, low, trembling cry of amazement, of joy, of—I do not know. Then everything was still again.

Then at the last, very softly, I heard a verse of the little old *chanson* that came from the South.



SO LIKE A GIRL!

HARRIS—How has the new servant turned out?

MRS. HARRIS—She is a perfect jewel—more ornamental than useful.

AT PHÆDRA'S TOMB

By Bliss Carman

WHAT old gray ruin can this be,
Beside the blue Saronic Sea?
What tomb is this, what temple here,
Thus side by side so many a year?

This is that temple Phædra built
To Aphrodite, having spilt
Her whole heart's great warm love in vain,
One lovely mortal's love to gain;
Yet trusting by that fervent will,
Consuming and unconquered still
(In spite of failure and of fate),
By favor of the gods to sate
Her splendid lost imperious
Mad love for young Hippolytus,
Whose brilliant beauty seemed to glow
Like a tall Alp in rosy snow,
While love and passion, wind and fire,
Flared through the field of her desire.

"Great Mother, come from Paphos now
With benediction on thy brow,
And pity! Not beneath the sun
Lives such another hapless one.
O Aphrodite of the sea,
For love have mercy upon me!
Give me his beauty now to slake
This body's longing and soul's ache!
Touch his cold heart until he know
The divine sorrow of love's woe."

What madness hers, what folly his!
And all their beauty come to this
Epitome of mortal doom—
A name, a story, and a tomb!

Have ye not seen the fog from sea
On Autumn mornings silently
Steal in to land, and wrap the sun
With its gray, cold oblivion?

The goddess would not smile on her,
On him no gentler mood confer.
He still must flush his maiden whim;
She still must leash her love for him
A fancy lawless and superb,
Too wild to tame, too strong to curb,

Too great for her to swerve or stay
In our half-hearted modern way.

Have ye not seen the fog from land
Blow out to sea, and leave the band
Of orange marsh and lilac shore
To brood in Autumn peace once more?

So there survives the magic fame
Of her imperishable name—
Light from a time when love was great,
And strong hearts had no fear of fate,
But lived and strove and wrought and died,
With beauty for their only guide.

And yet this temple, raised and wrought
With prayers and tears, availed her naught.
The years with it have had their will;
Her soft name is a by-word still
For thwarted spirit, vexed and teased
By yearnings that cannot be eased—
The soul that chafes upon the mesh
Of tenuous yet galling flesh.

How blue that midday shadow is
In the white dust of Argolis! . . .
This is her tomb. . . . See, near at hand,
This myrtle! Here she used to stand
Those days when her love-haunted eyes
Saw her new-built hope arise,
Watching the masons set the stone
And fingering her jeweled zone,
Or moving restless to and fro,
Her pale brows knit a little, so.

Look! every leaf pierced through and through!
I doubt not the gold pin she drew
From her dark hair, and, thrust on thrust,
Vented her vehemence. O dust,
That once entempled such a flame
With beauty, color, line and name,
And gave great Love a dwelling place
Behind so fair, so sad a face,
Where is thy wilful day-dream now,
That passionate lip, that moody brow?

Ah, fair Greek woman! if there bloom
Some flower of knowledge in the gloom,
Receive the piteous, loving sigh
Of one more luckless passer-by.
Peace, peace, wild heart! Unsatisfied
Has every mortal lived and died,
Since thy dear beauty found a bed
Forever with the dreaming dead,
In seagirt Hellas long ago,
Immortal for thy mortal woe!

THE HATRED OF FRIENDS

By Gertrude F. Lynch

WHEN Floyd Evans announced his determination to take a trip round the world, his decision created little comment among his friends. One of them remarked incidentally that he hoped Evans would not consider it necessary to announce that Japan was the most artistic country in the world and its women the most beautiful, as he had stood all that kind of talk he was equal to, and Miss Catherwood, a satirical spinster, suggested that as Mr. Evans had hitherto given his friends reason to expect a certain amount of originality in his actions, there seemed no adequate cause to fear a departure from precedent. "He isn't even going to take his wife," she declared.

The people who looked on globe-circling as trite might have had their interest stimulated had they known the reason for Floyd Evans's departure.

This reason had to do with Aimée Monannis, a widow and an intimate friend of his wife.

The friendship of the two dated back to knitted-sock days, and was based on a foundation of inveterate rivalry. They had hated each other and been friends ever since their first meeting, when Aimée had tried to seize a bon-bon on which Clare was nibbling and had been rewarded by a blow across her pretty face. They fought over their toys before they could talk, and as soon as they acquired speech employed it to call each other names, astonishing their governesses by their lingual readiness. When school-days came their emulation extended to their books. The usual methods of

cajoling or threatening youth into acquiring undesired information were ineffective with them; their desire to outrank each other was the only prod to their ambition. Their playtimes and playmates furnished causes for continuous battles, and torn frocks or disheveled hair testified frequently to the sincerity of their animosity. It was not, however, until their social débuts were made that the situation approached that acute stage of antipathy when they fell on each other's neck in the conventional society manner and kissed with an effusion that mere affection can never inspire. They praised each other's hats in superlatives and copied each other's most beautiful toilettes with a purring assurance that "imitation is the sincerest flattery." Their wit, beauty and dash made them leaders in their set, and their friends were divided into belligerent camps, spies from either side leaving no weakness of the enemy unremarked. Society, which to many becomes a treadmill, was to them always an inspiration. Hostesses delighted to bring together these two opposite poles, and considered no function complete without the light of their presence, while they in turn counted that day lost when by mischance they followed different paths of entertainment.

The greatest element of rivalry was, of course, the other sex. It was sufficient that a man show premonitory symptoms of regard for either for the whole of the opposite faction to unite in destroying the budding tendrils of his admiration. This, of course, only applied to the "eligibles;" the ineligible were assisted in every way,

in the hope that in an unguarded moment of sentiment or fatigue, one or the other of the fair combatants would commit *la grande faute* in the eyes of her world—an unfortunate marriage.

In their third season Fate obligingly stepped in and removed Aimée to other scenes. It was during this enforced interregnum that both married, each in her heart regretting the bloodless victory of her establishment in life, each listening in doubt to her lover's vows, conscious that if her rival had been in the field they might have been poured into other ears.

The interval of separation covered three years; then Aimée returned to her native land more charming than ever, with the added distinction of Parisian half-mourning and the freedom permitted the American widow.

The old friendship and the old rivalry were resumed. One could have sworn that absence had only made the hate grow stronger.

Aimée, to prove her friendship, accepted Clare's urgent invitation to make her house a home until she had succeeded in finding a suitable apartment, and to prove that her zeal in competition was still unabated, set herself deliberately to an attack on the affections of her friend's husband.

Clare had abated by this time many of the little coqueties of the earlier stages of her married life, but now she buckled on the armor of allurements again, and worked harder to retain her husband's love than she had ever worked to gain it.

The two friends were more sagacious in their antagonism than formerly, and more concentrated. They no longer attempted to range their friends in opposing factions; they no longer called attention to their competition by petty details of dress. So well they played their parts, so perfect was their hypocrisy that they deceived their world and sometimes themselves, though never each other.

That her husband would finally succumb to her friend's attractions had been a part of Clare's creed from the beginning; that he had not done

so before was due simply, so she believed, to the fact that Aimée had been on the other side of the world. So deep-rooted was this part of her doctrine that she had not hesitated to read to him portions of Aimée's letters and place her photographs in conspicuous places. A woman would probably understand this action better than a man.

Their victories, up to the time of their separation, had been very equally divided, and it seemed to Clare that Fate had played her a scurvy trick in removing Aimée's husband beyond the limit of retaliation. She consoled herself with the hope that she would take unto herself a second.

She waited the conclusion of Aimée's intrigue with a certain amount of philosophy. That it could not possibly take her by surprise was her only satisfaction, for that her husband could resist the fascination of her friend did not occur to her any more than the possibility of Aimée's husband resisting her own, if she had been allowed the opportunity to test her powers.

From the moment when Aimée appealed to Floyd's artistic sense by her beauty, her grace, her indefinable combination of American poise and Parisian charm, through the intervening phases of sympathy for her loneliness, interest in her future, fraternal advice in regard to her financial affairs, jealousy with respect to other men, until they approached the borderland of sentiment, Clare played the part of a blind woman to perfection; an ignorant observer might have believed that she was a discreet chaperon for a man and a woman on the verge of an engagement, rather than a wife looking on at the conquest of her husband by her most intimate friend.

She did not attempt to spy on them; on the contrary, she went to the other extreme, and closed her eyes to much that a more impetuous woman might have used to force an issue. She had no desire to lend her assistance toward a consummation sure to be; nor, in the most important battle

she had ever fought with Aimée, to lay down her weapons and confess herself beaten. She preferred a positive rather than a negative defeat.

Her disarmament took place in a secluded corner of the casino of a country golf club, where Clare suddenly came on her friend in her husband's arms.

"Are you faint, dear?" she asked, kindly. "I noticed you looked pale on the links."

She did not wait for an answer, but directed her husband to place Aimée on the divan and open the window. She further directed him to go for cognac. She herself loosened her friend's stock and fanned her with a folded poster of a ballet girl in white, kicking some black stars in a vermilion firmament, said poster having fallen from the wall, the nail modestly withdrawing its support.

"I thought you were attempting too much," she said, tenderly, avoiding the disarrangement of her friend's coiffure with her improvised fan—this last delicate attention showing conclusively that she had accepted the inevitable. She went further, and having dampened her handkerchief with eau de cologne drew it carefully about the extreme limits of her friend's oval face, avoiding any disarrangement of the applied design of her complexion; this, too, in the presence of her husband, who had returned with the cognac and looked bewilderingly radiant at Aimée's predicament, covering, as he supposed it did, any possible suspicion that might rise in the mind of a more distrustful woman than his wife.

It was not until later that he realized how the most innocent looking appearances may deceive. While in his room dressing for dinner, he heard footsteps in the adjoining apartment, and knocked at the door. It was opened by the maid, who had his wife's *négligée* over her arm and some toilette articles in her hand; the room itself was dismantled of person-

alities. He looked about in a half-dazed way before comprehending what was implied by this circumstance. "Madam thought she'd sleep better up-stairs," vouchsafed the maid, pertly; "she says she hears the noises from the street here in the morning."

He sat for a few moments in his own room, thinking deeply. It was at the dinner table, where Clare and Aimée appeared, radiantly cheerful in new costumes, and more affectionate in their manner toward each other than usual, that he announced his determination to take a trip round the world. There were some guests with them and the conversation did not flag for a moment; only a cynic would have seen that the repatee of the trio was forced, that they avoided looking at each other, or did so with elaborate efforts at ease; that occasional moments of thought punctuated their pleasantries.

The Arab has a saying, "To run is two-thirds of a man," and the Anglo-Saxon offsets this with "Discretion is the better part of valor." However much one may admire the bravery of the man who stays and fights, one must, if in a different way, admire the discernment of the one who foresees danger and escapes it. To remain meant recriminations, excuses, explanations, possibly a divorce, certainly an estrangement, the drifting further into entanglement; to go meant at least a time to think.

He said good-bye to his wife lightly; they were people of the world, and a separation of a few months did not call for demonstration. He announced that he would write her at the first convenient moment, and she knew that the letter when it came would settle her future. He said good-bye to Aimée without seriousness, except such as was contained in a pressure of the hands, a look of admiration into her beautiful eyes and the low-toned promise to write her soon. It was the thought of what his letter might contain that brought the quick flush to her cheeks as hand in hand the two friends saw him depart.

He had been gone three weeks when two trains, crossing a European frontier, collided. He was dragged from the ruins by a reporter for a New York newspaper on his way home from an International Conference, himself unhurt, and was carried unconscious to the nearest hospital. A meeting of provincial surgeons took place, he was prodded and punched, and after a portentous interchange of technical phrases, his wounds were pronounced fatal.

The International Conference had not furnished the exciting episodes that, it had been understood, would surely occur. Various diplomatic evasions, the straining of the *entente cordiale* of a decade, a social cabal of Great Powers—all these had failed to materialize into facts. It had been remarkable only for the stupidity of its meetings and the nullity of its conclusions. The accident came in the nick of time, and it lost nothing in interest in the long cable despatch sent by the reporter to his home paper. Royalty was in one of the private coaches, and the writer spoke flamboyantly of "An American magnate and Russian Royalty rushing together." The American was hardly a magnate, save from the point of view of a yellow reporter, but he was a man of distinction and of social connections, and his name was known to thousands of readers.

There was a dearth of news when the cable was received, and it was put in without the use of the blue pencil. A pathetic incident related at the end of the despatch even received the dignity of a sub-heading. This incident was, briefly, that regaining consciousness and learning from his physicians that his end was near, Floyd Evans had asked for pencil and paper, and having written a letter of some length, had given it to his rescuer to deliver in person; then, his mind being at peace, he had turned his head away and relapsed into unconsciousness.

An hour later the reporter had taken an express that would give him only time enough to catch a home-going steamer, and failed to

hear that the court physician, summoned from Paris, had plastered the Royal Family's scratches, given them something for their royal nerves, and then, directing his attention toward the lonely American, had discovered that, while he was badly shaken up, with several external bruises, he would be able to resume his trip in a few days.

A despatch was immediately sent by the invalid's orders to his wife, announcing the accident and the fact that he had escaped with trifling injuries.

This despatch was received before the morning paper with its flaring headlines, its detailed account of the smash-up, its announcement of the certain death of Evans and the touching episode of the letter.

During the weeks of his absence the intimacy of the two friends had not waned. Aimée had protested once or twice that she was wearing out her welcome, but Clare had pleaded her loneliness, and after an interchange of unmeaning flatteries, the situation remained unchanged. The withdrawal of the object of their sole remaining rivalry did not lessen the strain of their relationship; rather it intensified it, for uncertainty is a stimulant to the imagination. Time has a tendency to change one's early standard of values, and Clare and Aimée had reached the point in life where they recognized the insignificance of many of their former antagonisms; an invitation to dinner, a man hopelessly fascinated or a new gem was no longer cause for either tears or smiles. With the brushing away of the immaterial the material assumes greater importance; so in this last contention for the possession of the affections of Clare's husband might be discerned the essence of all the childish and maidenhood hatreds, the force of the "second breath," the duel to the death, toward which encounter their preceding battles had been but tentative attempts to test each other's power.

In their periods of meditation they faced every issue. The moment of her humiliation in the casino of the

golf club had made a lasting impression on Clare. Vague resolutions regarding divorce and legal separation filtered through her mind, all the nine days' talk, the triumph of her friend, gracefully concealed under a tearful confession of temptation and wrong-doing; and against this picture the alternative presented itself—if he should write, admitting his fault, asking her forgiveness, promising amends, would she not forgive him? No one knew so well as she the powers that had been arrayed against him. But it must be on her own terms if she received him back, and those terms excluded Aimée forever.

Aimée's mind was also in a turmoil. What did he mean by his sudden departure? Was this the thin edge of the wedge, leading to a permanent separation? Had he intended that she should so understand it when he whispered that he would write her? Against the hundreds of mortifications that she had suffered at the hands of Clare was placed this one great compensation, and in dwelling on the memory of her grievances it was easy to forget that she herself had caused them. There were moments of rage when she faced the possibility that he would write her a conventional, even brotherly letter, for her to read between the lines that he had not been serious, or was repentant. There were moments of ecstatic enjoyment when she hugged the triumph of the affair, and in the coming disaster to her friend could feel the gladness of the knowledge that in the final clash of rivalry her claim to superiority had been established. There were moments, too, when she went further, pictured herself as the wife of her friend's husband, and then suddenly recoiled at the knowledge that hatred, like love, has its limits of refinement.

Their hours were spent together in all the ways of enjoyment that leisure, wealth and culture suggest. There was no mention of the absent husband, yet each was waiting anxiously for the letter he had promised, which would terminate the incoherence of

the situation; not a sign or glance that they were conscious of each other's turmoil of emotions.

The despatch to Clare announcing the accident was handed to her as she and Aimée were starting for a reception. She read it and handed it to her friend. They exchanged pleasantries in regard to his good fortune in escaping when fatality lurked so near. Behind their persiflage was the serious thought of how closely Providence had come to settling their perplexities.

The next morning, according to habit, Clare read the morning paper over her coffee. Aimée, in a kimono embroidered with cherry blossoms, her feet in mules, lounged in a big chair and knit her brows over some French handwriting.

Clare read the article through twice, then handed it to Aimée with unmoved countenance. "There is quite an account of Floyd's accident," she said. "It is fortunate I received the despatch first," and she resumed her *café au lait*.

Aimée finished her letters, then, with a gesture of indifference, stretched out her hand for the newspaper. She read the account carefully, but made no comment. A few minutes later they separated, and alone in their respective rooms, removed the masks of indifference and hypocrisy. To which one had he written the letter?—to his wife or to her rival? Had he sought forgiveness and absolution, or, believing he should never again see the woman on whose account he had left his home, for whom he longed even in the hour of dissolution, had he breathed a sigh of farewell, a protest against love's incompleteness? Thus Aimée questioned. And if he had written to her? She broke down the barrier she had placed against the inroads of imagination and acknowledged that such a love deserved its reward. A man who wooed her on his death-bed should, on his resurrection, be immune from the ordinary afflictions of uncertainty and reserve.

Clare set her lips firmly. There had been given him a crucial test, and he had made his choice. She and he must abide by it forever. If he had written her but a word, a line; if in the supreme moment her image had been with him to the exclusion of all others, his infidelity should be forgiven; if not, there would be no hesitation on her part, no half-measures. She would free him without a word. She allowed herself but one agonizing protest—if it had been anyone but Aimée!

A week of uninterrupted companionship passed. It was the morning when the steamer carrying the holder of the letter would arrive. There was a tremulousness about Clare's hands as she poured the coffee from the big samovar, and Aimée was paler than usual. Each was conscious of the torturing observation of the other, the observation of criticism, not of sympathy, yet the third at the table, a maiden aunt of Clare, thought them more than ordinarily light-hearted.

Whatever Clare's faults, indecision was not one of them. She had matured her plan and kept to its execution without faltering.

She unfolded the paper and looked carefully over the list of incoming ships.

"Did you notice," she questioned, looking her friend squarely in the face, "that the *Cymric* is due to-day?"

Aimée was prepared. She toyed with the rose leaves in her finger-bowl. "That is the steamer on which the Bensons come, isn't it? I wonder if she has put some more Vienna labels on her Sixth avenue gowns to deceive her trusting friends."

It was Clare's turn, and she appreciated the fact that fencing with buttoned foils is, to the expert, time-wasting and innocuous.

"The editor of his paper wrote me that Mr. Barbould—the reporter, you know, who was with Floyd—would come on that ship."

"Surely," and Aimée shredded a

rose-leaf, "I suppose you want to see him and thank him?"

"I shall go down to his office as soon as possible—they are to telephone me when he gets there. I suppose I haven't any right to ask him to come here—he is probably very busy." After a pause, "You will come with me? It is awkward going to such places alone."

"I'll see you through," answered Aimée, kindly.

Neither spoke of the letter. Neither thought of anything else.

About twelve the telephone rang. "Mr. Barbould will be at his desk between two and three," was the message.

At half-past two, to lose nothing by punctuality or procrastination, they were seated in a gloomy room where chaos, equaled only by that of the primeval variety, reigned supreme. From corner desks men in shirt sleeves looked at them curiously or made excuses to pass nearer by circuitous tracks. An artist with green goggles threw aside his "wash" while he drew a hasty pencil sketch of them, to finish it later as a "Daily Hint."

A boy in blue, who effectively answered the haunting question of nursery days as to who has the button, handed each a printed slip, on which was printed, "M. — wishes to see M. — regarding —." Clare pushed hers aside contemptuously. She wondered if she looked as if she had a recipe in her pocket for keeping the hair a hundred years. She handed her visiting card to the boy and said, "Ask Mr. Barbould if he can see me at once."

After a long wait the small boy with his chest diagrammed with buttons returned and ushered them into an inner room, which they shared with three chairs and a table undisturbed for fifteen minutes.

Even their forced cheerfulness deserted them, and the nerves of both, irritated by anxiety and delay, had almost caused their speech to break the bonds of control, when the door opened and Mr. Barbould advanced, looking with keen glances from small,

black eyes from one to the other. The three remained standing for a moment, then, as if by preconcerted signal, seated themselves.

"I was glad to learn," Mr. Barbould said, addressing Aimée, "as soon as I landed, that the doctors had made a mistake, and that your husband's injuries were not serious. I assure you I quoted exactly what they told me, and to the layman unconsciousness always seems next door to death."

Aimée could not keep the flush from her cheeks at the significance of his choice. She faltered a little, and Clare came to the rescue.

"I am Mrs. Evans. This is my friend, Madame Monannis."

They looked at him keenly. Would the name imply anything? If he had accustomed himself to it, written on the outside of the envelope entrusted to his care, would he not betray that knowledge?

He faced them with the imperturbable countenance of a man whose thoughts are screened by habit. Clare had purposely slurred the name, but he pronounced it distinctly.

After asking pardon for his blunder, he continued, looking at Clare, but occasionally stealing glances of not-too-well disguised admiration at Aimée: "It must have seemed to you barbarous for me to leave him, but he was in good hands. They had sent for an English nurse, and the services of their physician had been proffered by the Royal Family. Newspapers do not recognize humanity, you know, except in the marriage and death columns, and I had to get back."

Clare thanked him prettily for what he had done, then a pause ensued, broken by the triply-buttoned boy, who ran in hastily with, "Mr. Eagen's waitin' to see yer."

"Tell him I'll be right there," Mr. Barbould responded.

Aimée was wondering satirically if this maneuver was the shibboleth employed in shunting visitors off the premises, and at the same time how Clare was going to approach the sub-

ject of the letter, which, it was apparent, he did not intend to do, while she listened to his closing remarks.

"That is really all, Mrs. Evans. I had been in the train but a moment when the crash came. I did for him only what anyone would have done in like circumstances."

Clare rose to her feet, and he sprang to his with an alacrity that might have been either over-zeal in courtesy or a desire to return to his work. Aimée remained seated.

Clare opened a gold-linked bag at her waist and drew out a folded newspaper slip. She opened it and pointed to some underscored lines.

"That letter—" a deep flush accentuated the moment of her frankness—"I should like it—it seems almost like a dying bequest, doesn't it?" There was no answer.

He stood, drumming with his fingers on the desk, his face imperturbable, his manner irresolute.

Clare felt Aimée's eyes burning into her soul. She noted his irresolution with well-acted surprise. "You surely cannot have objection—my husband's letter. If it is directed to me, it is mine, I presume, without question; if to anyone else—well, it is most natural that it should be given into my keeping."

She had expressed the doubt in her mind and stood before them, self-betrayed.

Still he hesitated under the searching scrutiny of the four eyes turned on him relentlessly. "Really—I—" Then all at once he braced himself. "I am in an awkward position, Mrs. Evans. As you say, it seems like a dying bequest. Further than that, your husband wrote the letter in the belief that he was dying. Nearly the last words he said to me were these: 'My dear fellow, I couldn't write this letter if I were not dying. I *couldn't* do it.' You see the fix I'm in; if he hadn't said that, it would be a different matter, although, even so, I should consider that I had but two lines of action open to me: to destroy it or to wait until he advised me as to its disposition. By Jove, he couldn't do

that, could he? for he didn't know my name. But at least I can destroy it."

Clare spoke hastily. "Surely you won't do that! The letter is not yours, and to keep it under such circumstances is equivalent to destroying it."

Aimée said nothing, but her lips were slightly parted and the pupils of her eyes were dilated like a cat's in the dark.

Clare struck a final blow. "There may be an ethical responsibility in the matter; I don't know. Questions like that are too subtle for me to contend with; if there is, I relieve you of its burden. I accept it gladly, and I ask you, as a gentleman, to accede to my request and give me the letter."

He bowed gravely in assent. "Very well." He had regained his poise, and his countenance was more unreadable than ever.

He turned at the door. "I will send you the letter immediately; it is in my desk." His glance of farewell rested on each in turn with unmistakable admiration.

They could hear the sound of his footsteps down the uncarpeted length of the outer room. Their eyes did not meet; Clare was tearing the newspaper slip into bits, and Aimée watched a ray of light with its countless atoms of dust, which stretched from corner to corner.

The room was so still that they could hear a mouse gnaw in the wainscoting.

The door opened. It was the buttoned boy, who rushed in with a letter in his hand, which he placed, with the flap uppermost, on the table between them and hurried away, slamming the door behind them.

It was no mere word of farewell, to whomever it was written, no hasty phrase of good-bye or hope. It was a thick letter, so much they could discern in a fleeting glance.

Aimée's impulse was to seize it, turn it over carelessly, and in her prattling voice that often hid design, say, "Here's your letter, Clare; let's go"—an apparently innocent act that would have given her opportunity to

read the superscription. But the tension of the situation was too great; she could not bring into the maneuver the artifice necessary to make it successful. So they sat motionless a moment longer, the letter with its fateful message face down on the blot-stained table.

Finally Clare put out her hand and drew it toward her. Her normal complexion was one of creamy pallor; in moments of excitement there were dark circles under her eyes. Aimée had never seen these circles so black as now. She had a moment of thankfulness that her foreign customs made the tint of rouge imperative.

Clare turned the letter with a jerk of the wrist, as if she had reached the point where hesitation had become insupportable.

The original letter had been enclosed in another envelope, one with the steamer's mark in the corner, as if the bearer recognized its importance and desired to offer it protection against mischance. The blank square seemed to mock at them with its futility.

Clare's countenance lost its ashy hue, and Aimée was conscious that her fingers were interlocked so tightly that the delicate kid was strained almost to ripping.

It was a reprieve; they felt like the condemned who, facing a score of rifles, hears the command for a final inspection before the death shot.

Clare took the letter, and opening her bag thrust it in. "It doesn't seem right to open it here, does it, dear? After all, they are his dying words, and should be sacred."

They rose together. "It is a horrid hole," assented Aimée, as they passed the outer door. "Strange that newspapers, that are supposed to have only what is fresh and new, should come from places so musty."

On the way home Aimée was conscious that a new complication had arisen. Clare had the letter; what was to hinder her keeping it, even though it were not directed to her? She might reason, as Mr. Barbound

had done, that a letter written on a death-bed is one thing, a letter written on a *supposed* death-bed another. Could not Clare justify herself for its retention on the ground that her husband had been unduly tempted—that already, perhaps, he repented? Then, too, there was the inevitable temptation to outwit her opponent at the last, to employ subtlety rather than directness. It was a possible intricacy that appealed to Aimée as a strategist, though she resented it as a woman—a woman, moreover, deeply interested in the outcome of the predicament. She had no recourse. Her hands were tied. She could not force Clare to a confession, neither could she employ other means for arriving at the truth. Mr. Barbould was impossible; no fascination would avail against that wall of imperturbability. Even a letter of congratulations, bristling with suggestive interlinings, might follow Floyd about the globe for months, and any other letter was impossible, for after all, his own letter might have been, possibly *was*, written to his wife.

What would she do if the positions were reversed—if she were the wife and held the letter?

She felt the blood tingling through her veins at the possibility. She would fight this battle to the death and with unsheathed sword; not by trick or artifice, but in fair field, with no favor. They had ever been good fighters, and if it were her choice they would be good fighters to the end.

Without turning, without noting the poise of Clare's head, held rigidly erect, Aimée was conscious that the other, whose mind she read with the clearness of habit, was fighting the very temptations she had anticipated. She knew, too, when the supreme moment came, and the temptations collapsed into nothingness at the blow of pride. She felt no surprise when, on reaching the house, Clare said, "Don't go to your room yet; come with me."

They removed wraps and hats, flung them on a convenient couch and took accustomed seats on either side

of the tea table. Clare opened her bag, and extracting the letter laid it carefully across the top of a Balleek cup, through whose fragile transparency the light shone in a rosy glow. She then leaned her head against the cushions of her chair, while Aimée, too, lay back, breathing an audible sigh of relief.

There was a tap at the door, and the maid entered to make tea. She filled and lighted the alcohol lamp, ladled the orange Pekoe into the tea ball, placed the kettle over the flame, arranged the furniture, shades, the biscuit and bonbons, and departed.

Her soft footsteps and deft movements had not disturbed their reveries.

The room was reposeful with the quiet of late afternoon—that atmosphere of serenity the dying day brings.

It was a room dainty rather than elegant; a place to which Whistler might have objected, for its harmony was constantly sacrificed to sentiment.

In the history of its inanimate treasures was written the history of Clare's life and of Aimée's.

On the wall, in a far corner, was an oval medallion containing a lock of Clare's hair torn from her head by Aimée in a childish struggle, and framed by Clare's mother as a reminder to both. There was a quaint figure sitting on a tabouret facing them, dressed in pink rags; it was "Iretta," the last doll. Clare had resurrected it from an old trunk, and but yesterday they had laughed themselves into tears over its battered head and face, the innocent victim of an old-time dispute; on the writing table a big book, also resurrected from the trunk, bore in Aimée's handwriting the diary of succeeding days. Like the history of Josephus, it bristled with conflicts and tears. It was punctuated by the ever recurring phrase, "I hate her!" Clare had found it once, read it, and then hidden it so that her weak points should no longer be perpetuated by the ruthless hand of her friend.

Scattered about were photographs

of the two women. There were pictures of them in their commencement gowns, in their confirmation robes, dressed for riding, for the ball, for their weddings, with portraits of the blond exquisite, Aimée's young husband, cut off prematurely, and of Clare's husband, handsome and debonaire.

On the table a copy of Browning, with knife inserted, recalled Clare's brilliant essay in their graduating year, which had forced Aimée to its study, a hated task then, an engrossing admiration later; and the opened sheet of music on the piano recalled Clare's patient struggles with preliminaries to rank Aimée's natural gift for the instrument.

Symbol by symbol the eyes of the two women followed the evidences of this rivalry through all its contentions, humiliations and heart-burnings, until they rested at last on the most momentous of all. Step by step they followed the development of their hatred from the time of their childish contests to the present crisis, and realized fully that at the opening of the letter all the emulation that had lasted from pinafore days would be over. Whatever it contained, to whomever addressed, the separation of lives paralleled so long had come.

They stripped their minds of the little vanities that mar the clarity of thought, as motes of dust the sunbeam.

What would their lives have been without each other? What would their characters have been without the stimulus of hostility? They recalled the placidity of their mothers, the indifference of their fathers, the ineptitude of the home training. They pictured the normal result—butterflies of fashion sated with pleasure, facing the sluggishness of middle age, the horror of gray hairs. Face to face with truth, they acknowledged that they owed each other everything that was worth while in life. Their weaknesses had been done to death by each other's unerring criticism and ridicule. Their inherited and natural inertia had been stirred to action, they had

been forced by each other's ambitions to do, to strive, to gain. Their accomplishments, their love of study, their outdoor sports, which had brought health and strength to naturally delicate bodies—for all these things they were indebted to each other, and furthermore, for the knowledge that nothing life might bring could quell their indomitable spirits.

Was it hatred they felt?

Only once had the suspicion that it could be anything else entered Aimée's mind. She had showed a picture of Clare, just received, to her husband soon after her marriage. The beauty of the face had roused all the old antagonisms, and she had struck the picture lightly with her jeweled hand.

"She is the most disagreeable being on earth," she had said.

"And the only one I am jealous of," he had answered, gravely.

She had laughed, almost hysterically. Jealous of Clare! She amused him through the evening with accounts of their quarrels and rivalries, and had continued the recital at intervals through a week; at the end of that time he said again:

"But she is the only one of whom I feel jealous."

Had he read her more truthfully than she had read herself?

During the years of her married life Aimée never formed a real friendship, only friendships of convenience, and she knew that she displaced no one in Clare's life when she returned.

Step by step they followed their hatred from the days of childish violence to the intricacy of the present situation; step by step they watched it develop—into what?

Aimée looked at Clare; against the yellow cushion her black hair looked like polished ebony. Her eyes were closed and her face looked strangely pathetic in its pallor.

The sun had set; in the room was the grayish light of the eventide; the flame of the lamp played about the copper kettle and shone through the transparent pedestal on which the letter rested.

Clare opened her eyes suddenly and caught Aimée's glance.

For a second they gazed into each other's souls.

Then Clare, without a word, sat upright in her chair, lifted the letter and handed it to Aimée.

Aimée's slender fingers closed about it, while Clare's dropped to her side.

An instant's hesitation, then the letter was held to the flame that leaped to meet it, that curled about its edges, ate into its heart—destroying forever the secret of the husband's preference.



BALLADE À LA MODE

ONCE men were generous and good
 When knights were bold and ladies gay,
 When rich and simple Norman blood
 Was in a circulating way;
 But cash is all the rage to-day
 (My bills are not allowed to run)—
 The times have changed indeed; they say
 Do others now lest you be done.

The sin of hoarding golden verse
 Is rare as rubies, but the sin
 Of dodging creditors is worse
 Than poor relations dropping in.
 The millions others lose and win
 By others may be lost and won,
 Because the golden rule has been
 Do others now lest you be done.

Amid the giddy social whirl
 It is an easy thing to spend
 An even thousand on a girl
 Whose father draws a dividend.
 Of heiresses there is no end;
 So when you woo the lovely one
 For better or for worse, my friend,
 Do others now lest you be done.

L'ENVOI

To-day the nations buy and sell
 In every land beneath the sun.
 Attend the moral! Ponder well!
 Do others now lest you be done.

WILLIAM GRIFFITH.



FILIAL INTEREST

“IS old Gummidge wealthy?”

“He must be. His children are dreadfully afraid he will marry again.”

HAIL, FOLLY!

ON a day I met with Folly,
 Knowing not a flirt was she;
 She was piquant, she was jolly,
 And she thrust out melancholy
 With a smile of witchery.
 I, supine, could not disarm her,
 Though I guessed in some degree
 There was mischief in my charmer.
 So it came about, you see,
 Folly made a fool of me!

Folly tired of her adorer
 When her slave I came to be.
 Scoffing at the love I bore her,
 Vexed because I boldly wore her
 Too familiar livery.
 Petulant, she scourged and left me
 Shorn of all my panoply.
 So it was when she bereft me
 Of her smile, she set me free—
 Folly made a man of me!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.



WAGGISH

“WHAT a sad dog you are, Clubleigh! Always short!”
 “Well, I’m no dachshund, I’ll admit!”



IMITATING THE BIG 'UNS

AN insect that stung like a bee,
 Said in tones that were lacking in glee,
 “My name, which is Nat,
 Sounds so utterly flat,
 That I spell it for style with a G.”

BLANCHE ELIZABETH WADE.



ONE touch of merriment makes the whole world grin.

PURELY CIRCUMSTANTIAL

By John Winwood

BRAYNE dropped his head on his hands and looked over the tips of his fingers at his client. She was a pretty woman; but she was also a well-loved and much appreciated cousin, which obviated danger.

She met Brayne's eyes with defiance in her own.

"You seem puzzled, Richard," she said. "Surely the matter is clear to you. I have put the facts before you plainly enough, hideously enough, I might say, to-day, yesterday and the day before."

She laughed, the laugh of a woman who dares not cry. Brayne looked at her kindly.

"My dear child," he said, "how can the case be plain to me when it is so frightfully befogged to you? You have made the facts clear enough, I grant you. I have told you what you *can* do. The thing that puzzles me is, what you *want* to do. We have not succeeded in crystalizing that."

Mrs. Craig leaned wearily back in her chair.

"You are playing with me, Richard," she said. "I never thought you a man who would jest with a poor wretch hanging over a precipice by her finger tips. And that is precisely what you are doing with me—"

"If I could be sure," interrupted Brayne, "that you wished to be helped I would certainly waste no time in airy badinage."

"But—what shall I do, Richard?" said Mrs. Craig. "I come for advice, and you give me parables. I don't want words from you. I've had enough of them already from other

people. I want your help, your advice. What shall I *do*?"

"Shall I speak as your lawyer?" said Brayne. He looked keenly in Mrs. Craig's troubled face. She nodded. "Then," said Brayne, "divorce him. Wait!—that comes from your lawyer. As your friend—as his friend—as a man who loves you both, I say forgive him. Great heavens! the man has repented; he has paid thrice over and again for his folly. What more can he do now? He can't undo what has been. The only thing a man *can* do is to draw a new line and begin again. It's a woman who must wipe out the stain. Your forgiveness would be absolution. Vera, why *don't* you forgive?"

"All women forgive," said Mrs. Craig; "they were put into the world to pardon—like priests or governors, weren't they?—only *we* are not supposed to give penances or sentences. Oh, it is pitiful! You have no right to expect so much."

"We have gone over all this before," said Brayne. "The question is simply this, do you wish to leave your husband? It's for yourself and not a court to settle! You can do either—it's in your own hands, not in mine or anybody else's in the world. As a rule, it is not so painful for a woman to forgive where she loves."

He waited for a response, but Mrs. Craig was silent. Brayne's eyes narrowed as he looked at her. A light, half of anxiety, half of amazement, dawned slowly on his face.

"If there is any other reason why you wish to leave him, of course—"

He stopped abruptly and leaning toward Mrs. Craig touched the violets

pinned on her jacket. "Where did you get those?" he said.

Mrs. Craig flushed painfully from brow to chin. "Those?" she repeated.

"Those, certainly," said Brayne. The lines deepened about his mouth and eyes. "Who gave them to you?"

Mrs. Craig looked down on the flowers with an expression that endeavored to be frivolous and succeeded in being pitiful.

"A fool—a fool. I met a fool i' the forest," she quoted, lightly.

"I see," said Brayne. He caught her eyes in his own. "Will you give me one?"

She rose suddenly to her feet and wrenched the violets from her jacket.

"All of them," she said. "I don't care for them. Take them all."

She laughed a trifle hysterically. "It will be part of your fee, Richard," she said. "Did anyone ever pay you in this romantic way before? I won't see you again until my mind is fully made up. I've bothered you too much as it is. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Brayne.

He touched the hand she gave him with no relaxation of his face and closed the door of the office behind her. He walked to his desk and looked down at the violets there. "Another man, eh!" he said, presently. "And I never thought it. Poor Craig—poor fellow! That's the reason for this juggling, and I thought it simply the pride of the woman. This does complicate matters—or rather explains them. I wonder, now—" He looked at the violets again as if half-expecting them to reveal the donor's name. "At any rate, she left them," he reflected. "A woman has only two reasons in the world for doing anything: one is because she cares too much and the other because she cares too little. Let me comfort myself with the reflection that she left these because she *didn't* care."

He tossed the violets aside as the door opened.

"Well?" he said. "What! you, Vera?"

"I have changed my mind," said Mrs. Craig, bluntly. "I have come back for these."

She lifted the violets from the desk. Her hand shook as she fastened them in her jacket. There was a red spot in either cheek as she faced Brayne. "I found I wanted them," she said, simply, "so I came back. That is all. What is it the children call each other when they take back a gift? An Indian giver? You can call me an Indian giver if you like, Richard."

"Vera!" cried Brayne. He laid his hand on hers as she crossed the threshold. "What does this mean? Tell me, I have had enough of riddles. Be honest with *me*, at any rate."

Mrs. Craig drew her hand from his. There was a flash of tears in her eyes. She spoke over her shoulder as she left him.

"It means, Richard," she said, "that I have made up my mind for good and all. I won't tell you now; to-morrow, perhaps, but I know—"

The whir of the descending elevator drowned her words.

Back in his office Brayne walked to the window and stared down at the surging humanity in the street below. "Well," he thought, "so this is the end of it. Poor Craig! poor little Vera! and I would have staked my life on the little woman's truth. What a world it is! What a miserable tangle the whole scheme of it is!"

Brayne left his office early. He felt blank, dispirited. He had long ago ceased to have over-much trust in men, but the morning's experiences had shaken his faith not only in women but in his own judgment, and he was sore accordingly. As he ascended the steps of his club a man coming down caught at his arm and greeted him cheerily. Brayne groaned as he looked into the handsome, almost boyish face—a face that showed that its owner possessed great capabilities for either good or evil; a face that,

with certain conditions as lights, might show either as a god or a devil. "And when she goes," reflected Brayne, "there's not much doubt of the result."

"Hello, Craig!" he said, aloud. "You seem in the deuce of a hurry. What's up?"

"Nothing," said Craig. "I have an appointment, that's all."

Brayne caught his arm as he would have passed. "Appointments will wait," he said. "Come in and have a drink."

There was a compassion in his voice that would have fitted the offer of greater things.

A little vender of violets paused on the curb and lifted his wares beseechingly toward the two men. The sight brought the morning vividly before Brayne, and he turned angrily toward the boy, but Craig laughed and tossed the suppliant a coin. "A friend of mine," he explained to Brayne.

He came close to the older man and laid a hand on his arm.

"Old chap," he said, "you've been a bully good friend to me. When I deserved a kick from everyone on earth you didn't even side-step. I want to tell you—" his voice trembled—"that it's all right—that I'm

the happiest man in little old New York."

"What do you mean?" said Brayne, dully. "I don't understand."

"This morning," said Craig, "I met her, and she let me talk to her a moment, and that little flower chap came by, and I bought some violets and dared offer them to her, and she—bless her—took them. *Took* them, Brayne! The sweetest woman in the world!"

Brayne stared at him stupidly. Craig's face was radiant.

"And now—not ten minutes ago—she sent for me. I'm going home, Brayne, old man."

His voice broke. He shook Brayne's hand violently and plunged down the steps.

Brayne stood and watched him go. A second later a man passing Brayne looked at him curiously and tapped him on the shoulder.

"What's up, Dick?" he said. "You look like a man in a trance watching a sunset. Have a drink?"

Brayne started, then he laughed long and joyously. He took his friend's arm as they went up the steps together.

"Understand," he said to that bewildered person, "that the drinks are on me—decidedly on me."



AS PASS STRANGE SHIPS

IN the mid-space where souls abide
Met two in anxious quest;
Each sought the one that on the earth
Was loved the first and best.

They passed each other without pause,
As ships on mist-blown seas;
She knew not he was Abélard,
Nor knew he Héloïse.

SUSIE M. BEST.



To judge by some of the accidents, *automoblesse n'oblige pas*.

AWAITED

ALTHOUGH I dare to say
 My heart untarnished is from day to day,
 'Tis not, O Love, that any strength of me
 From sin has kept me free.

But as I now look back
 Across the years that span the weary track,
 All the dear deeds I ever strove to do
 Were done because of you.

All the white thoughts I had
 Were but pure flowers to one day make you glad;
 Every improving act, each little grace,
 Humbly, dear one, I trace

Back to my hope of you,
 Long, long before your wondrous face I knew;
 Ah, your white coming, silent and unseen,
 Made me and kept me clean!

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.



MISTOOK THE FLAVOR

"IS this heaven's bliss that I taste?" cried the ecstatic lover, as he pressed
 his lips to her cheek.
 "No," said the innocent young thing, "that's sachet powder."



A WOMAN OF THE EAST

CAPRICIOUS, changeful, dark of eyes and hair,
 Soft, sinuous, silken, sure of every art
 Needful to trap her Western lover's heart,
 As subtle as sweet poison . . . Ah, beware,
 Faithless who seek to woo yet linger not,
 For though ye sail a thousand leagues away,
 Far down the years her spell holds fatal sway—
 She is avenged who may not be forgot!

CHARLOTTE BECKER.

OBJECT, MATRIMONY

By A. S. Duane

MR. TEMPLE was born in a California mining camp in what are known as "early days." As a consequence he had no childhood's home to return to when he wanted to settle down. He was the type of man who would have gone back to a place like Parkersburg, West Virginia, for example, had that been the home of his ancestors, and spent the rest of his days building a hospital and a library, and quarreling with the town council over the way they were managed.

Mr. Temple was naturally a domestic man. He had the instincts of a citizen, and he had never been able to indulge them. From South America to the Klondike, from Australia to China, he had traveled, not as an adventurer in any sense, but as the sober, hard-headed, shrewd agent of a company. Nothing turned his head. He never put money into foreign speculations. He left his salary in the home offices, and bought into the company he represented. When he was forty-five he was browned, distinguished looking, very lonely and the owner of a million dollars in gilt-edged securities. It was at this time that he concluded to retire and marry.

He had not married before for the simple reason that he had never met an unmarried woman that he wanted to marry who gave him any encouragement. Romantic fiction is full of instances of men who fall in love with beautiful women and are only inflamed by rebuffs. Such cases, like thoroughly consistent men, are to be met with only in imagination. Mr. Temple had often been flirted with

on long steamer voyages by young women who looked all right. But either they bored him, or each seriously preferred some other man. He had met a dozen young women any one of whom he would have been proud to introduce as his wife. Once in a while he had almost confessed to one, but had veered at the hurdle.

When he decided that he was tired of travel, and that he had all the money he wanted, he settled in New York.

He had few acquaintances in the metropolis. There were two men whom he felt entitled to call old friends. They were men who would have arranged matters for him had he lost his money, and who would have arranged his funeral had he lost his life.

He thought vaguely that probably one of these would introduce him into society and to the wife he meant to have. He was just in the prime of life, he told himself. He understood that few busy city men marry before forty.

His friends put his name up at their clubs, told him that he was certain to be elected in a year or two, and one of them asked him to dinner at his home. It was a large suburban house, thirty minutes' ride from a ferry. When Mr. Temple let himself into his bachelor apartment that night about twelve he was vaguely wondering how a clever chap like Henderson ever came to marry such an ugly, silly old woman, with dictatorial, raw daughters and a bad cook. He was as much surprised as if Henderson's crime were recent.

He turned on the row of electrics,

cunningly hooded, over the head of his bed, and opened the last new book. Reading was Temple's one habit. In his long years of wandering it had killed the time. To-night the book was not interesting. He threw it aside. He was too tired to sleep, he told himself. In reality he was too disappointed to sleep. Evidently Henderson's people could do nothing for him. A newspaper lay on the table by his bedside, where his Japanese boy had placed it for his convenience. He took it up idly, glanced at the first page, and for the first time, consciously, saw the personals.

BONNE FOI—Your evident respectability encourages equally respectable, well-known gentleman to request one interview, same place, Friday. INTERESTED, 152.

YOUNG gentleman, alone in city, without friends, desires acquaintance young lady; 16-18. MATRIMONY, 221.

"That comes somewhere near my own state," Temple said to himself. Then he began to think.

"I wonder . . ." he said. "It couldn't do any harm. Who knows? It would amuse me, anyway. Of course, no respectable woman—no lady . . . Of course, a nice woman would never think of such a thing. She would have plenty of opportunities to marry—to know people. But then—here am I."

He reached out for pad and pencil, and after an hour evolved a personal to his satisfaction, and priggish enough it was. He touched the button by his head, and the Japanese came down from the servants' rooms up-stairs.

"Sats," he said, "take this over to the newspaper office and get it into to-morrow's paper. My name is not to be mentioned."

When Mr. Temple saw his advertisement leading all the rest the next morning he flushed with shame. He tried to forget it. He told himself that under no circumstances would he send to the office for replies. But that night they lay, a many-colored, many-angled pile, on his table. The Japanese knew his duty.

Now Destiny is a queer thing. On the top of the pile was an envelope addressed neatly on a typewriter. He opened it, and found the contents also typewritten. It read:

Your advertisement sounds as if it had been written by a gentleman. I am a lady living with my friends, but very lonely. I will not write to you, but if you will allow me to see you and judge by appearances, I shall let my judgment decide whether or not to meet you. If you will walk slowly along the western walk by Central Park, between Seventieth and Eightieth streets, on Thursday morning at twelve o'clock, I shall see you.

Mr. Temple gave a little snort at the audacity of the request. "A typewriter, I suppose!" Then he saw a P. S.:

I am not a stenographer, or a working woman at all.

Now had there been anything of interest in the rest of that pile of letters the typewritten one might have been passed over. But the next ten were impossible, conceived in ignorance, incoherent or plainly mercenary.

Mr. Temple, properly denouncing himself as foolish, went to Central Park West at the time appointed. He tried to give his stroll a casual air, and was prepared to argue that he had gone there merely for his health. If a woman spoke to him, he might even rebuke her icily. No woman did speak to him.

The next morning he received another typewritten letter, that said:

I shall leave to-morrow on the Sound steamer for Boston. I shall be, as usual, about thirty years old, very well dressed, and about the handsomest woman on the boat. If you care to do me some service and make my acquaintance, properly introducing yourself, we might become friends. Any reference to these letters is, of course, barred. I cannot imagine how a gentleman could ever have resorted to the personal column. Any recognition of the fact is not compatible with your dignity or mine.

When the *Priscilla* went under Brooklyn Bridge that evening Mr.

Temple was aboard. He soon saw her. There was no mistaking her.

The boat was fairly well filled. Many people were going to Newport. At half-past five o'clock the sun was high enough to make the Bridge a thing of beauty against the sky. She was standing by the rail looking back when Mr. Temple first saw her. He recognized her with an actual thrill. She was hardly thirty, he concluded. She had the appearance of a girl, except for the maturity of her eyes. She looked at things as if she saw them. She was conventional and modish. A maid stood by her holding some wraps.

He wondered if she had seen him. How was he going to find any excuse to speak to her? Presently she took a wrap from the maid's arm, one of the loose box coats that are suited only to a perfect figure and that showed her belief in her good looks. The servant went into the cabin, and the lady turned toward the camp chairs. Now was Mr. Temple's chance. The blood flew to his face as he secured her a chair and lifted his hat.

"Thank you," she said, with the utmost coolness.

"May I—er—place it for you somewhere?" asked Temple. He was more embarrassed than he had ever been in his life. But a man cannot spend a lifetime going up and down the earth without having the manners of travel. Temple was a gentleman, and nobody could mistake the fact. An American girl of thirty, with a maid at her elbow, is not a timid creature. Before dark they were talking. They sat beside each other at dinner—and when the lady went to her stateroom she carried Mr. Temple's card.

On the train to Boston the next morning they talked almost like old friends. The maid called her "Miss Love," but as she had given him no intimation of her name he did not venture to address her by any. He plainly said that he was going to stay at the Arlington in Boston, but she gave no intimation of her destination,

driving away in a cab with only a word of farewell.

Temple's heart went to his boots. She had evidently found him wanting somewhere, and he had flattered himself that he had proved congenial. He had not been able to sleep for happiness. It was here at last! And she, this beautiful, charming creature, was lonely! How ready he had been to let his loneliness counteract hers! He had felt so sure of her—almost as sure as a man who has proposed and been accepted. She had seen him and had made this appointment. And now, after all her graciousness, she was riding away without ever a word. Somehow he had not dared ask her. He threw his light overcoat from one arm to the other, and as he did so something fell. It was her coat. It was identical in color with his, and he had not noticed that the two were together. His first impulse was to get into a cab and follow her. Then slowly it dawned on him that he could do nothing but wait.

He waited so conscientiously that he did not leave the hotel at all, and feed every boy about the place to hasten with any message that came for him.

It was one o'clock when one of the boys came up, triumphantly piloting a large gentleman with white side whiskers. The large gentleman was evidently somewhat bewildered at the assurances of the boy that "the gen'l'm'n was expectin' him."

"I fear, sir, that I intrude where another is expected," he began. "The servants here insisted on my coming instead of bringing my card to you." He held it out and Temple, with a dignified but affable countenance, read:

MR. THOMAS QUINCY WINTHROP.

"My niece, or rather, I should say, my niece by marriage, asked me to call on you and ask if she carelessly left a wrap in your charge this morning."

"She did," said Mr. Temple—"or at least a lady did. Her name, I believe, was Miss Love."

"Mrs. Winthrop," said Mr. Winthrop. "'Love' was a silly name given to her in her girlhood by her mother, the late Mrs. Delancey—a charming woman, but intensely romantic. She came from Alabama. I am glad to say that her daughter is more practical."

Temple heard almost nothing of this, so appalled was he by the "Mrs." She was married! His anger rose and his pity as well. What a brute her husband must be! Like all men in love, he saw no blame for her in deceiving her husband. Of course, he was a brute to drive her to deception. But the next sentence he heard:

"She wished me to thank you for your kindness to her on the journey. Her husband was like a son to me."

The elder Mr. Winthrop was a garrulous old gentleman, but when he brought out that "*was*," Temple could have hugged him. It was all right. She was a widow.

Temple suddenly got his wits together.

"Mr. Winthrop," he said, "your name is very familiar to me. Have I never had the pleasure of meeting you—at—the Somerset Club?"

"Probably, probably. I belong to the Somerset."

"I was sure of it," said Mr. Temple, warmly. "I was introduced there some time ago by Mr. Fitch. I am sure I met you."

"Jim Fitch?" Mr. Winthrop was delighted. "We were boys together. He died last year."

In the end Mr. Temple was asked to dinner that evening.

Something like a twinkle crept into his eye when he saw Mrs. Winthrop. He had intended to kiss her hand when he had the chance, and murmur, "I was properly introduced, was I not?" but the twinkle was met by such a cold stare that he thought better of his purpose. After all, he had tacitly promised never to allude to the personal and the letters in any possible way.

It was the most conventional of dinners, but Temple had the oppor-

tunity to let them know exactly who he was. He was a modest man, and one not given to false pretenses, but he felt he would have been a fool not to put his best foot foremost. A man who has spent his life in travel may not have accumulated many society friends, but he has a supply of conversation and stories for all occasions. When a Bostonian opens his house and his heart he opens them wide, and Temple left the place feeling like a boy.

They say that the course of true love never runs smooth.

This love affair seemed to be of the machine-made variety. It went as smoothly as all of Mr. Temple's affairs had always gone.

In the early days of his work for other men, the president of a company had selected him for an important mission against the protests of a board of directors, who called attention to his youth and inexperience.

"I have noticed," said the president, "that Temple is a lucky man. He always finds the man he goes in search of, and always finds him in a good humor."

And Temple's luck did not seem to desert him now.

He went back to New York as an acquaintance of Mrs. Winthrop made in Boston. He called at her brother's house on Madison avenue, and was received with Southern warmth by a large and enthusiastic family. There was just one little thread of wonder in Temple's mind—how anybody had managed to be lonely in that household.

Mrs. Delancey, the sister-in-law, was a pretty, plump woman from Kentucky, who, having passed her youth as a belle, now spent her time cultivating her daughters that they might bloom into successful marriage, as she had done.

Mrs. Delancey's family was so large that Temple found some difficulty in counting it, but, as one after another came in, he thought each prettier and better mannered than the last. And judging from their manner to their aunt, he concluded that she did not

shake them off long enough to feel lonesome.

One day, when he and Mrs. Winthrop were walking up Fifth Avenue to take a look at the latest portrait exhibition, he could not refrain from speaking of this conclusion.

"I should think your brother's family would keep you occupied," he remarked.

"Oh, they do. I love them all dearly. I am so accustomed to having half a dozen of them about that I am quite lonely when I go to Boston. I promised myself that the next time I went I should take two of them with me."

"You are never lonely, then?" Temple asked, rather oddly.

"Lonely!" She laughed and showed all her pretty front teeth. "The blue devils get little chance with the Delancey family. I am one of nine children. They are all alive in different parts of the country. I have (let me whisper it!) *thirty-six* nephews and nieces! As I am supposed to be a lady of leisure, I am asked to do the New York shopping for all those families. They think in the shops that I am a purchasing agent, and wonder why I do not ask the usual commission." She laughed again.

"I haven't one relative," he said.

"Ah!" and her voice was truly pitying for one unconscious minute. "You must let our boys and girls be good to you." Then suddenly, as if at thought of something, her face flamed. They talked very rapidly of other things, but both were self-conscious and both knew their time had come.

That evening Temple called and was shown into Mr. Delancey's own den. The master of the house was a busy lawyer who insisted that he worked in the evenings and that nobody was to disturb him. As a matter of fact, he smoked and read the papers, usually with two or three of the family "helping" him. He showed Jane and Clay out of the smoky room when Temple entered, and gave his guest a chair and a cigar.

Temple didn't waste much time. "Delancey," he said, as he struck a match, "I want to marry your sister."

"That's all right," Delancey said, easily, "I wish you would. Said anything to her about it?"

"Well—not exactly." He concluded that the "object, matrimony," on the advertisement could hardly count. "But I have an idea she understands."

"Yes," said the frank Mr. Delancey. "She'd be a fool if she didn't. All the young ones call you 'Uncle John' behind your back."

Temple laughed. He liked this free and easy family.

Mr. Delancey suddenly grew grave. "I know who you are, Temple. I was brought up in a law office that was counsel for the N. V. and W. We are about the same age, I should say, and as I got up in the firm your name began to appear. I know how you carried through those French negotiations. I know pretty much all about you except your personal character. I like you, and I believe in you, but few men reach your time of life unmarried without some sort of an entanglement. If it isn't matrimony it is usually—well, something—"

Temple started to speak, but Delancey stopped him by a gesture. "My sister is the youngest of a large family. She was our baby, our pet. She married a charming young man, who seemed to be everything good. He broke her heart. Now I want you to give me your word of honor that there is not in this world any ghost to rise up and mar my sister's happiness. If there is, I ask you as a man to go away and leave her alone."

Temple rose, and the keen-faced lawyer rose also.

"As I stand here, Delancey," he said, with the solemnity of an undemonstrative man, "there is not in this world a woman who has—or—" he hesitated—"ever had a claim on me."

They shook hands, looking into each other's eyes. Then the little ceremony that had carried them out

of themselves concluded, and after some desultory conversation that was calculated to relieve all embarrassment, Temple went home.

How he ever got over the actual proposal he never knew. He knew only that he and Mrs. Winthrop were engaged and congratulated and dined, and that the family was packing for its Summer home before he "quite came to himself," as he expressed it.

They were to be married at the Summer place, in the village church; then would spend a day or two in New York before sailing for Europe. They had been making a call in one of the big apartment houses near the Park, and were walking home. Walking along by the stone wall Temple began to smile. Mrs. Winthrop looked up at him sympathetically, smiling, too.

"What is it?"

"I was wondering—" he knew her so well now it almost seemed they had no reservations—"I was wondering what sort of a chap you honestly thought me when you first saw me walking along by this wall."

Her eyebrows went together in a little frown.

"When? I do not remember. We were never here before."

"I was," he said. "I suppose you were up there in that apartment with an opera glass."

"Is it a joke?" she asked, helplessly.

"Oh, say, my dear, let's have it out. It was so absurd of both of us! It was such a piece of luck—but suppose you hadn't been you!"

"You are speaking of something I do not understand." Her voice was sweet and easy. "Why shouldn't I be I?"

"No reason on earth. But you must confess it was a terrible risk. Of course you had seen me and knew I was not a ruffian, but I went down to that boat perfectly blind."

She still looked puzzled, but her face had set a little.

"Do you imagine I ever saw you before that day on the *Priscilla*?" she asked.

"You had, hadn't you?"

"Are you doing me the honor to imagine that I am the heroine of some street encounter, that—" her face grew red—"I made your acquaintance by design on that boat? You seemed kind—and a gentleman. Did you by chance mistake me for someone you had met before—someone who had made overtures to you?"

The full horror of his mistake overwhelmed Temple. Why had he been such an ass as to bring up the matter? He had picked out the woman who most pleased him on that boat, and had, with the fatuity of an idiot, supposed that this woman—this modest, sweet, happy woman—had answered a matrimonial advertisement in a morning newspaper. How could he have thought such a thing! How could he tell her that *he* had written a personal?—that she was to be his wife as the successful applicant among many? And *some* woman knew his secret—*some* woman had seen him on Central Park West and then again on that cursed boat! A woman who would answer a personal would likely be a blackmailer. And he had solemnly sworn on his honor that not a soul had any claim on him. Then—Temple's nerve came back. Nobody could have a claim on him. The whole thing was absurd. And he was not the sort of man to risk his life's happiness, and what he intended to make her life's happiness, by a conscientious unloading of this silly indiscretion. His parents were not New Englanders.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "I am very silly and very vain. I had received an impression in some way that you had seen me before that evening on the boat. I beg your pardon for mentioning it. I wanted you to tell me about it. I fear my joking was stupid."

"Some silly nonsense of the children, I suppose," she said, her face clearing up. "They thought it so clever to tease me about you with all sorts of tales. I didn't dream they had been at you." Temple drew a long breath of relief.

They took an automobile home. As Mrs. Winthrop went up the steps, Clay, the eldest boy, came staggering out of the door with a package.

"Hello, Mr. Temple," he cried, "can't you take me in? It's father's old typewriter," he said, as he adjusted himself. "I'm taking it down to have it fixed. He keeps it in his den, and sometimes Aunt Love or I copy something for him."

"What's wrong with it?" Temple asked, idly.

"Some type twisted. The 'l's' lean, and the cross is off the 'f.'"

An hour later Mr. Temple looked carefully at two typewritten communications. In each, the "l's" leaned and the cross was off the "f."

"I'm glad I didn't get up an elaborate yarn," he said, as he tossed the letters into the fire.



LITERATURE

THERE was a man who wrote a book,
And very well indeed it took;
So then another man he went
And wrote another book anent
The man that wrote the book.

But seeing this, another took
The hint, and said: "I cannot brook
That others only should succeed!"
And so he wrote a lengthy screed
About the man that wrote about the man
that wrote the book.

To try to tell you all were vain,
Because it is an endless chain.

WILLIAM WALLACE WHITELOCK.



THE MODERN PRIMER

SEE the Young Man. Is not he the same Young Man who but yesterday esteemed himself the Great Exhibit and walked with all the pomposity of a White Elephant? Yes, but he has since been up against it and bounced back. You see, he was just a little afraid of the Girl's three-cornered, stern old Sire, who had a Chin on him like a Hunk of Flint, and Eyes that looked right through you at the Watch Pocket; and so he was fain to ask the Old Man's Consent by Telephone. Before he had much more than got half-way through with his Proposition, the Father of the Fair One broke in:

"I don't know who you are, sir; but it's all right."

That is why, to-day, the Young Man shows so plainly that he feels like a Stewed Prune.

TO MY ENEMY

LET those who will of friendship sing,
 And to its guerdon grateful be,
 But I a lyric garland bring
 To crown thee, oh, mine enemy!

Thanks, endless thanks, to thee I owe
 For that my lifelong journey through
 Thy honest hate has done for me
 What love perchance had failed to do.

I had not scaled such weary heights
 But that I held thy scorn in fear,
 And never keenest lure might match
 The subtle goading of thy sneer.

Thine anger struck from me a fire
 That purged all dull content away;
 Our mortal strife to me has been
 Unflagging spur from day to day.

And thus, while all the world may laud
 The gifts of love and loyalty,
 I lay my meed of gratitude
 Before thy feet, mine enemy!

L. M. MONTGOMERY.



AN UNWORTHY SCION

“NOW looky here, young feller!” severely said the Old Codger, addressing his callow but self-sufficient nephew, who was dividing his time about equally between thinking himself the Whole Thing and furnishing sustenance to his first mustache, “it’s a good long spell since I occupied the place in the pathway of life where you now stand; and then I didn’t have half the advantages and accomplishments that come easy to you. I didn’t wear a shirt waist or patent leather shoes, nor smoke siggyrets, nor think I’d seen it all, and that if I was prematurely snatched away wisdom would go with me; but by grab! I did have the tum-tum and horse sense to know when two and two made twenty-two.

“I was a red-necked yokel in them days, I expect, and a mighty good subject for a comic picture, but when a pretty girl like the one I saw foolin’ round you on the parsonage porch at the pound party last night pinned a flower on my coat, and tilted her dimply chin up just a little and looked sideways at the blossom, while a delicate blush like the dainty pink on the inside of a seashell tinted her cheeks—well, if I hadn’t known what to do next, and done it, I’d a-gone out at the first opportunity and let the—by gosh!—hearse run over me!”

TOM P. MORGAN.

WHAT M. MAURICE PELOT SAYS

By John Regnault Ellyson

YOU come from Paris—from the office of the *Figaro*? Well, monsieur, take a chair. I will talk with you. Yes, I will tell you of my adventure at the Château of the Triple-Deuce.

First of myself, you say? But it is just on this point I have nothing to say—for the present. I am under the most serious charge ever brought against a man, and I prefer to remain unknown, or known only by the name the police have bestowed. I shall let matters run as they may until the last moment, and then— But, monsieur, let us now have the true facts of this affair.

At the solicitation of Prince Victor-Louis I undertook a singular task. It was necessary to go far and to labor diligently. I traversed strange paths, penetrated wild regions, dwelt familiarly in remote places. I went into the very heart of India and I remained there twelve years. I obtained at last what I had gone so far to seek, and I turned my back on the East, I can assure you, with peculiar pleasure.

When I again touched my land of France I sought at once my good friend, the Prince. In your journal, by the way, you describe admirably his character and qualities. He was most affable and most liberal. He possessed excellent taste in all matters, surprising personal charms, great wealth. He had achieved honor in many fields by his talents. He was unique, one of the most erratic and learned men of his day. You say all this eloquently, as befits the subject, but you omit something that should be mentioned—I speak of his much

too profound knowledge of the occult. As a mystical savant he had no rival in Europe.

I was saying that I sought the Prince, but it happened during the year previous that he had abandoned Paris and gone to reside at his newly designed and magnificent château—behind the hills yonder—in the Tremaupin valley. I am told that no one has been allowed to describe the place in print. Cajole the authorities or bribe them, and go over there by all means—the trip will handsomely repay you.

I left Paris on Thursday last in the evening and arrived there the next day at dusk. I was met at the station by the Prince's valet, M. Favi, and driven along a picturesque route. We took the broad path that winds among the hills down through a deep grove into the beautiful valley. The moon, just then rising, lighted up the scene. Passing an outer and an inner gate and under a long, dark arcade of giant elms, I came suddenly in front of my distinguished friend's rococo caprice—his enchanted château.

In a few moments we entered its court of unveined marble, white and cool, a court into which opened four massive doors. Here I was received by M. Clairin, the Prince's confidential secretary, who immediately led the way through one of these doors into the entrance hall.

I caught the scent of burnt amber as I crossed the threshold and found myself in this vestibule, that resembled a great shell of very deep red bronze. Minute electric flames, of the same hue as the groundwork, issued from everywhere, above and be-

low, from every jutting point and embossed peak of the metal of which the walls were composed. It was a curious Inferno in miniature. However, the rich carving of the oval dome, the comeliness of the designs beneath, the perfection of the craft employed, rendered the whole rather sumptuous in effect than somber.

This entrance was for the chosen few, for dear comrades and devoted friends. Singularly enough, it led directly into the Prince's chamber, which was luxurious and of noble proportions, exquisitely frescoed in steel-gray and pale green. The polished *tarsia* of the floor was half-hidden with rugs of woven silk and velvety wool. There were Oriental divans and couches wrought in divers forms and variously adorned. There were mirrors innumerable, cabinets inlaid with jewels, vases and perfume-jars, and soft, mysterious draperies as fine spun as the subtlest web. There were also instruments of music, those that the Prince loved so well, dulcimers and harps, with which he often lulled his fancies after studies or calmed his energies for slumber.

Through this chamber we passed into another, more spacious and more splendid—the chamber of the divinities. The walls merged, as it were, with the dome and formed the interior of a vast half-globe, presenting a mimic concave of the skies at night, dark blue and fretted with gemmed constellations. Art could have gone no further. It was marvelous. Under the dome here, on all sides, in gold or ebony or ivory, were the gods men worshiped in ancient times; not merely those of Greece or Rome, Egypt or India, but those of all creeds and all climes. At the feet of each burned incense in urns, on tripods or on altars. The odorous vapor rising unceasingly rendered the light dim and mystical—the light from the jewels in the eyes of the graven images.

But we did not linger among these objects. We hastened on and soon entered the third apartment—the library, in which the Prince now be-

guiled the best part of his days in dreaming, in pondering over philosophies, in solving forbidden problems. The chamber was small, comparatively, yet none the less uncommonly decorated, though with less fancy displayed and with less color.

I took but slight note of the embellishments. I confess, indeed, that the Prince, who met me here, absorbed my whole attention. As I entered he advanced eagerly and saluted me with extreme courtesy.

After M. Clairin withdrew he shook off all reserve. He seized both my hands, embraced me again and again, and expressed his pleasure in flattering terms. We took chairs then at a little table, on which there were fruits and wines, and while I refreshed myself he paid me many very friendly compliments.

"But tell me, my dear Prince," said I, finally, "how have you fared during my long absence, and how has the world moved?"

"I was never in such excellent health, and everything goes well."

"And Madame, the Princess?" I inquired.

"Ah, more charming than ever," he answered, as he glanced toward the middle of the room and smiled. "Decidedly more charming than ever," repeated he, assuming a gallant air and rolling the phrase on his lips as if it were a delicious morsel.

No person of my experience, you may presume, can be easily astonished, but when my eyes fell on the object at which my friend still glanced, I leaped out of my chair. I was thrilled and fascinated by the conception I beheld, and I wondered how it had thus far escaped my observation.

A few long strides brought me to the centre of the room. I looked and marveled. Then I turned to the Prince, who had followed at my side, and I would have questioned him, but I could not—I could not for the moment utter a single word.

On a trim, square slab of unflawed jet, raised to the height of four feet and supported by a coiled mass of

serpents in bronze, was set the most remarkable device, I am sure, that ever a man has seen. It was a bust of the Princess, divine in its beauty, in all its chiseled graces, in its bloom of breathing life, but by some startling perversity the countenance wore an expression almost demoniac—an expression like a grimace of contempt, a sarcasm in pantomime, an inarticulate taunt. The beautiful eyes blazed with malign fires; the nostrils dilated; the lips writhed; between the perfect teeth protruded the delicate tongue, curled like a scarlet fang, and through this tongue or fang ran the silver wire of a pendulum that vibrated incessantly.

"There's something here that's more than art!" cried I at last.

"Yes; quite true."

"Tell me, is it life, or magic, or marble?"

"All three," said the Prince, calmly.

I shuddered.

"My friend," added he, "you know what a scholar values above all else—silence and solitude. The Princess, somehow, could never understand this, and so one day I tried a little experiment, and here's the result. I can have her now always with me—I can adore her at my leisure, and still . . . Come, let us sit down."

We resumed our chairs. Neither of us, however, reverted to the subject. He was silent; I was employed in smothering my emotions.

We ate a little and drank some wine. Presently the Prince began to talk again, and for an hour or more he chatted of his manifold schemes, of his enigmatic aims, of his incomprehensible desires; he chatted learnedly, of course, caressingly, in the tones of a man of the world, though in the language of the mystic; he chatted about theories the most unusual, about problems of spirit-destiny, about ecstatic conditions and existences and wonderful metamorphoses, and he spoke all the while in his own singularly quiet way.

Just as I was well-nigh losing myself in these speculations, he recalled

me by a request to narrate my adventures in India. I was grateful for the change, and I at once entered minutely into the history of my travels. The Prince listened with attention, and grew particularly interested when I began to recount my mishaps, the snares into which I fell—my escapes. His features brightened as I told how I studied the native manners and adopted them, how I practiced my ingenious wiles, and by what means I ingratiated myself into the favor of the devout, and through them into the Hindoo temples and among the priestly caste. I described my movements, from point to point, in seeking here and there for what I failed to find, however, until I went forth into waste places and jungle regions and met the *Bhairabi*, whose woman's heart I wooed and whose steps I followed to the cave-shrine of the most horrible and holy of all *Yogis*. Much loved of the god Shiva, this ineffable and sacred creature had sat on a naked stone at the mouth of his cave for fifty years in the sun, the wind and the dews, fed by unseen hands and worshiped by pilgrims. Year after year, rapt in trance, he had remained in the same position, except for one day only in a moon, when he allowed himself some ease and permitted the communion of the faithful.

"Famed for his surpassing sanctity," said I, continuing, "serene and wonderfully aged, he was shriveled in person and black, blind of one eye, grim and spectral, hoop-shaped, half-dead and dumb——"

"Dumb?" demanded the Prince.

"Dumb—absolutely speechless," I replied.

"And then, of course, you went elsewhere?"

"No, I remained three whole years at his side!"

"And you lost so much time?" inquired the Prince.

"Surely no time was lost," said I, "for the saint, I discovered, knew the desired words—the words I had gone so far in search of——"

"But the accent, the inflection!" cried the Prince, sharply.

"True, I say he had lost the use of his tongue, but believe me, he had the finest pair of ears in the world."

"But how could these serve you?"

"I will explain. First let me tell you that my homage won his admiration, and when I found I had captured my man, I clung to him. I employed all my arts. I succeeded. I secured the four cabalistic words. He wrote them in the sand at his feet, and I engraved them in memory. On those rare days on which he took his ease I repeated them to him each a thousand and a thousand times, so shifting the stress and so modulating the voice as to obtain at length the true accent and just the needed tones in which they should be uttered."

"Ah!" cried the Prince, exultantly.

"But after all," said I, "I fear—I grievously fear they are altogether useless, for from what I gathered from this wise and sacred character it would seem they are the only remaining part of some very, very ancient and forgotten rite."

"Well," said the Prince, composedly, "I give you my applause. You have certainly performed marvels. I appreciate your great talents. I am going to reward you handsomely. I am going to show you the very, very ancient and forgotten rite of which you speak, and to prove, moreover, the efficacy of these magical words."

Neither the manner of the Prince nor his alluring phrases deceived me in regard to the purpose he had in view. Knowing that the uplifting of the veil that had hung for centuries over certain interior visions of life, visions that in many ways would subserve his audacious spirit, was the real object of the Prince, and knowing, too, at what cost he had wrung knowledge from the unknown on at least three previous occasions, I could but doubt the wisdom of any precipitate action on his part. I trembled for my master; I felt a sense of the peril of such spells, of evoking such portentous forces. I should have

protested if I had dared; as it was, I did all that could be done—I hesitated in signifying my approval.

"At this time—in this place?" I asked.

"Now and here," said he.

The simple glance he gave made me quiver as one quivers on the verge of a cliff. Getting out of his chair at the same moment, he stepped to a cabinet at his right and opened one of its drawers, from which he produced an oblong, slender, inlaid casket, containing five tapers of wax daintily moulded in the fashion of a lady's fingers. He laid them in his open palm; of the five he chose four, casting the fifth aside; each of the four tapers he placed in a separate diminutive stand, and he set them in order then on the table between us and the light.

"My friend," said the Prince, gravely, "I think you are aware that there are to be no questions, no exclamations, no interruptions of any kind. I need not caution you—you thoroughly understand me. You shall merely deliver the words one by one—one at each moment when I nod my head."

The Prince became silent; then he mumbled incantations; then he made a number of gestures, strange signs in the air, and then suddenly the apartment darkened.

He lighted the first taper and nodded.

I pronounced the word as desired, and immediately the light of the taper glowed like a jewel of chilling white lustre; then it flickered and dimmed and became extinguished.

The Prince resumed his incantations. He lighted the second taper and nodded.

I uttered the second cabalistic word, and the light grew vividly red, diffusing a wild glare round us; then it flickered as before, dimmed like a fading ember and died out.

Again the Prince mumbled the *mantras*, and again he paused and lighted the third taper.

As I breathed the third magic word in the air the light grew intensely

green, and the objects about us and the features of my friend were ghastly to behold; then the flame flickered and waned until I could see no more.

Yet once again the Prince murmured in strange tones, and while the accents still lingered on his lips he turned and ignited the fourth taper; then he was silent and then he nodded.

I spoke the last mysterious word, and the light of the taper flared with a peculiar, indescribable, black radiance—with a weird blackness that burned like a star, and then the luminous quality in the light, the unearthly lustre, grew faint and faded, and soon the darkness only remained.

I waited, quite naturally, for some manifestation.

I listened; there came no sound, no movement, no murmur. I spoke; the Prince made no reply. I stretched my hand toward the chair on which he sat; the chair was empty. I called; there was no answer. I ran my fingers along the table at my side and found a little silver gong with

which the Prince summoned his servants. I struck it sharply, repeatedly. The doors immediately flew open and the attendants entered with flambeaux.

I took the Prince's secretary and his valet aside and spoke to them. These two dismissed the others, and together we made a thorough search.

We looked everywhere. Everything in the chamber was as it had been. The priceless volumes were on the shelves. The beautiful ornaments, lying round in profusion, were secure and intact. The cabinets were unopened. The jewels were untouched. In a word, not a thing was gone, not a single object was missing—except the Prince.

The Prince had vanished.

Monsieur, I have nothing to add. At present I can say no more. I told you in the beginning that I should let affairs take their course until the very last moment. Then—and only then, if needed—then, I say, I shall make some revelations that will startle France.



GET RICH QUICK

I WILL tell you a plan for gaining wealth
Better than banking, trades or leases.
Take a banknote and fold it up,
And then you will find your wealth in-creases.

This wonderful plan, without danger or loss,
Keeps your cash in your hands with nothing to trouble it,
And every time that you fold it across,
'Tis plain as the light of day that you double it.

WILLIAM H. HALLER, JR.



AS GOOD AS NEW

"HOW about those good resolutions you made the first of the year?"
"Oh, they are still good."

Jan. 1902

PRETTY LOUISE

SWEET, dainty Louise!
 Dear, darlin' Louise!
 Oho, and I'm certain
 That back of the curtain
 With Jack you were flirtin',
 You naughty Louise!

Coquettish Louise!
 You rosebud Louise!
 So! you give me the mitten?
 You're coy as a kitten!
 Well—now I'll be flittin',
 My poutin' Louise!

What cryin', Louise?
 You meant but to tease?
 Here's a kiss, and another,
 A hug that will smother,
 And an end to the pother,
 My darlin' Louise!

Now you're happy, Louise!
 Star-eyed as you please.
 Ah, the sweetest of misses
 Is Lou when she kisses—
 And the sequel to this is
 I married Louise!

JOHN ONSLOW.



IN RURAL AMERICA

“YAPHANK is not a large place, is it?”
 “No; it is so small they call their theatre the Grand Opera House.”



USUALLY SO

MERRITT—A man is as old as he feels.

CORA—How about a woman?

MERRITT—She is generally as old as other people feel she is.

MODERN FOX-HUNTING

By George F. Underhill

“IT is a poor sport that is not worth the candle.” So wrote Herbert in “*Jacula Prudentum*.” We have been told that the expenditure involved in fox-hunting does not bring sufficient interest in the way of enjoyment in return for our pecuniary outlay. We do not intend to deny this impeachment; but we do contend that fox-hunting is one of the important factors in England’s agricultural prosperity. We have lately been put on our defense by the prosecution of certain faddists, who, with no knowledge of the subject, decry sport in general and hunting in particular. The effect of this prosecution has been reactive. These antagonists to fox-hunting possess no logical consistency. They cannot understand the political economy of sport, and they have never experienced the healthy excitement it engenders. But ethical discussion we will leave to a more serious pen. We prefer the healthy excitement and the social side of fox-hunting to the academical lectures of the missionaries.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century fox-hunting was confined to the country squires, under which denomination we include peers of the realm who lived on their own estates, farmers and other occupiers of the soil. But even in the eighteenth century fox-hunting was a recognized social institution, and the hunting-field was the club of the neighborhood, to which the tenant farmer was as welcome as the lord lieutenant. There were also regular clubs for hunting men, such as Boodle’s, founded in 1762, and the famous Tar-

portey Hunt Club, founded in 1770. However, it was not till 1850 that fox-hunting became an important element in the political economy of the country. To hunt meant to encourage horse-breeding, to put money into the pocket of the farmer by increasing the market for hay and corn, and to give employment to an army of grooms and stable-helpers. Hunting had assumed the character of a business. Farmers, horse-dealers, veterinary surgeons, tailors, saddlers, hotel proprietors and even railway directors found a profitable customer in the hunting man. Towns sprang up where there had been only villages, and hunting, described by Burke as “one of the balances of the constitution,” now became one of the bulwarks of commerce. The sport was no longer a rural pastime. It was essentially the national sport, by means of which wealth was diverted from the towns into the country. It was a recognized institution of English life, involving the circulation of capital and the employment of labor.

We trust we shall not weary our readers if we indulge for one brief moment in statistics. Roughly, there are 150 packs of fox-hounds in England; in each pack we may assume that on the average there are 100 horses used exclusively for hunting purposes—that is to say, that there are 15,000 horses kept in England for fox-hunting. If we put down the average life of a horse in the field at five years, and the average price paid for him at £100, we find that £300,000 is annually spent in England for hunting horses. Then we must take into consideration the enormous num-

ber of horses that, though not used exclusively for hunting, could not be bred, purchased and kept if it were not for the sport, such as covert-hacks, trappers, and the numerous kinds that do duty both between the shafts and in the field. Again, every one of the 15,000 horses used exclusively for hunting costs in fodder ten shillings a week to keep; thus £7,500 is spent weekly, or £390,000 per annum, on fodder for hunters. It would take the work of a Royal Commission receiving reports from every county in England to arrive at any approximate amount of money spent directly and indirectly on fox-hunting, but even the figures that we have given may enable our readers to form some estimate of the wealth distributed by means of the sport.

But fox-hunting is not necessarily an expensive sport, as some people consider it to be. On the contrary, one of the reasons why fox-hunting is popular is that a man may increase or decrease his expenses according to the state of his pocket. There is no arbitrary rule, even in regard to the amount of his subscription. The amount he is expected to subscribe varies with different packs; but the general rule may be laid down that a man who hunts one day a week should subscribe ten guineas; three days a fortnight, fifteen guineas; two days a week, twenty guineas. If he hunts more than two days a week, he may adopt a sliding scale, remembering that it is always best to err on the side of generosity. In some provincial packs the amount he is expected to subscribe may be less; but in the shires—that is, for the Belvoir, the Cottesmore, the Quorn, and the Bytchley packs—the amount is more, the lowest subscription for a man who rides in pink being twenty-five guineas. But to the man who resides in the shires for the sole purpose of hunting the amount of the subscription is of little consequence. To many of us a gallop over Leicestershire affords the keenest pleasure this world can give. Here you see the pomp and

circumstance of hunting in perfection; but if you wish to take part in the pageant you must be prepared to pay high prices for your horses, and to spend more money on incidental expenses, such as clothes and saddlery, than you would spend in a provincial country.

Now it is what Charles Kingsley termed “the wholesome feeling of being at home among friends” that constitutes the chief pleasure of English fox-hunting. If the enjoyment consisted only in killing a fox, we should probably revert to the times when the fox was not regarded as a sacred animal and a chartered thief. Even at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in districts where there was no organized pack of hounds, it was the custom after the discovery of a fox to summon a meeting of the country yokels by the ringing of the church bell. They then attempted to find the fox and despatch it with sticks and stones. It is hardly conceivable that a dog fox could have fallen a victim to this system of hunting, though probably a vixen with her unborn or new-born litter of cubs was frequently sacrificed. Modern fox-hunting cannot afford much pleasure to the bloodthirsty sportsman, who would get sport more to his liking in the Rockies or the Indian jungle; yet the hunters of big game are mistaken when they think that fox-hunting is mere child’s play. We must remember that, though it is the image of war without its guilt, there is also the twenty-five per cent. of the danger of war. Probably most of the accidents in the hunting-field are due to carelessness, but the finest horsemen in the world are apt to be careless at times, as is proved by the fact that the most serious accidents have taken place either on the flat or at small fences or gaps. In this respect the hunting-field resembles life. We collect all our energies to surmount the weighty obstacles, and come to grief over the easy places.

To the stranger in the land, the social aspect of a meet of foxhounds is one of the most wonderful sights

English society can show. At no other function can he see such a genial *bonne camaraderie*, yet there is a certain air of business about the gathering which tells one that every member of the crowd has come out to hunt and not merely to enjoy a Winter picnic. But he will have to make his observations quickly. The old system of hunt breakfasts and coffee-housing is disappearing, and little law is given to late-comers. Punctuality is the order of the day, and within a few minutes after the advertised time for the meet the Master gives the word to the huntsman, who at the head of his hounds trots off to the first covert it is intended to draw, much to the disappointment of the carriage-folk, foot-people and cyclists who compose the motley crowd of spectators. Of late years, we are sorry to observe, it has become the fashion for these spectators to attempt to follow the hounds, thereby causing unnecessary damage to the land, and spoiling the sport of the horsemen and horsewomen, who pay for their pleasure and are regarded as licensed trespassers by the occupiers of the land. Now fox-hunting depends on the good will of the tenant farmers, who allow us to ride over their farms so long as we compensate them for the damage we cause; but people who do not subscribe to hounds are trespassers setting the law at defiance. Their conduct is impertinent, and has been the cause of much friction between the farmers and hunting men. As a rule, they are ignorant of the rudiments of agriculture. They will leave gates open, so that cattle may stray all over the country and the farmer be compelled to waste a day in finding and driving them back, while should young colts or fillies get loose, they may damage themselves permanently. They will break down fences and trample over vetches, young clover seeds, Winter beans and growing wheat. We do not suggest that they do harm maliciously; but whether the damage is intentional or caused through ignorance, the result is the same, so far

as the farmer is concerned. When hunting was confined to the residents of the country, little harm was done through ignorance of agriculture; but now that, owing to railway facilities, a man may breakfast in London and be at covert side in the Midlands by eleven o'clock, we have a new class of hunting men that was unknown half a century ago. The late Duke of Beaufort declared that "the true pleasures of hunting are known only by those who hunt from home." After a long day in the saddle it is not pleasant to be obliged to hurry to a railway station and to take a long journey by train in muddy and possibly wet breeches and boots, while the men who have been our comrades in the chase are reveling in the luxury of armchairs and carpet slippers in front of a fire before dressing for dinner. Unfortunately, also, England is far from being up to date in regard to railway accommodation. The leading companies, especially the London & North Western, have found that it is to their interest to study the comfort of their hunting passengers. They issue special hunting season tickets both for men and horses; but there is yet much to be desired. We cannot have the same luxuries in a train as we get at home, but it should not be difficult to provide convenient dressing-rooms.

Apart from the discomfort of hunting by rail, which makes a toil of a pleasure, it is the most expensive method of hunting, and one that should be adopted only when the saving of time is a necessity. To hunt during the day and to rush up to London to fulfil a social engagement in the evening, as is now the fashion with certain younger members of the smart set, seems to us to be spoiling two enjoyments. Moreover, our experience is that few men can stand the strain of this incessant traveling throughout the hunting season. We cannot, to use a familiar phrase, burn the candle at both ends. Nor can the man who hunts regularly by train have much time to devote to stable management, but is obliged to rely

on the honesty and general trustworthiness of his grooms. Now it must be borne in mind that a careless master makes a careless groom, and that the more personal supervision a master gives to his stable the better will the groom do his work. A good groom will look after his horse more thoroughly if he knows that his master appreciates his endeavors. It is only untrustworthy grooms who object to the constant and unexpected presence of the master in the stables, and it is best to get rid of such men as soon as possible. We must also remember that there are numerous stabling utensils that are necessary, and if the purchase of these is left entirely to the groom we must not be surprised if our saddler's bill is larger than that of our neighbor who superintends the details of his stable. The same argument applies to the purchase of fodder. But for the man who hunts by rail this superintendence is almost impossible, so that it is seldom he takes a pride and a delight in his stables. Many men have given up the pretense of finding pleasure in keeping horses and prefer to hire from a good livery-stable keeper. Although this system has been in vogue for the best part of a century—it is referred to in "Handley Cross," published in 1843—it has largely increased in favor within the last decade. Hunting men who reside in the country affect to despise the system; but we think that it works well for men who are obliged to use the train as a covert-hack, always provided that you can rely on the livery-stable keeper, for the average hireling is a very moderate horse. We have on several occasions hired hunters for our American visitors, and they have invariably given satisfaction; but then we knew the men from whom we hired. If a man wishes to hire he should tell the livery-stable keeper these two things:

(a) His riding weight.

(b) His riding qualifications, *i. e.*, whether he is a hard riding man, or a man who only wants to see sport with no risk to his neck.

It is not to the advantage of the

horse dealer to defraud his customers, and he knows it; therefore he should be told explicitly what is required, and he will do his best to give satisfaction.

An American guest once said to us, "You English are fox-hunting mad." We were staying in a country house, where the rule was to hunt by day and to talk about hunting by night. Within a week our visitor was as enthusiastic as any of us. It would be difficult to analyze this enthusiasm, which originated from curiosity. We do not see it in regard to other field sports, such as shooting and angling, though we find it in certain pastimes such as golf and lawn tennis. The most notable example of fox-hunting enthusiast whom we have met was "Broncho Charlie," one of "Buffalo Bill's" henchmen. After "Buffalo Bill's" show was closed, Charlie rode a race at Bingley Hall, Birmingham, against a cyclist, and on the Monday after the race came out with the Albrighton Hounds on an American pony with the cowboy's saddle. It was his first experience of English fox-hunting, and he told us that he had intended to lasso the fox, but had been advised to leave his lasso at home. He was a quiet, unassuming man; but at a dinner given by one of the members of the Albrighton Hunt in his honor he was as fox-hunting mad as any of us. As this man was one of the finest rough riders who ever crossed the Atlantic, we need only say, "*Verbum sapienti sufficit.*" We derive a keen enjoyment from making converts, especially transatlantic converts; but the task of converting our faddists at home is more difficult, for they are afraid of undergoing the ordeal of experience that is necessary for conversion.

At the commencement of every hunting season during the last twenty years we have been told that the golden days of fox-hunting are over. Yet more men hunt now than ever before, and *a fortiori*, more money is spent over the sport. We will admit that in many parts of England the natural character of the country has

been altered to such a degree that it is impossible to ride over the land. Our large towns have extended their feelers in the shape of jerry builders, like centipedes, and many of the old hunting districts are now, in the language of the land agents, picturesque suburban neighborhoods. Certainly our artistic eye fails to see "the picturesque" in damp vermilion bricks and the clay morasses that are dignified by the name of roads; and the fox shares our opinions. Briefly, though more men hunt, there is less country for them to hunt over as season succeeds season. Then we have to contend against barbed wire. We may say without fear of contradiction that no invention has caused so much harm to our national sport as barbed wire. We agree with the remark of the late Major Whyte-Melville, made to an occupier of land who had erected a fence of this variety: "I bear no ill-will toward any man; but if anybody were to tell me that you had sat down on a wasps' nest, I should be glad to hear it." At the present time the removal of barbed wire constitutes a big drain on the hunt funds. Our American visitors have been taught to believe that one of the charms of English scenery consists in the rural aspect of hedges and ditches. Their disappointment must indeed be great when in the place of natural fences they see strings of barbed wire. The peasantry who earned a livelihood by hedging and ditching have been driven out of the agricultural market by the manufacturers. But it is a mistake to consider that this extensive use of barbed wire is due to any antagonism toward fox-hunting on the part of the farmers. They consider this method the easiest and cheapest way by which to mend their fences. We doubt its merit, since the barbs prick the hides of cattle, thereby injuring the value of the hide in the tanner's yard, while on farms where it is used the drainage is neglected. Therefore if fox-hunters can diminish the

use of barbed wire they will benefit agriculture.

We should like to say more about the relations between fox-hunting and agriculture, but we have only one field left to us over which to gallop before we lay down our pen and give the final "whoop." How often in stern reality, with hounds running from scent to view, have we been in that last field, with a fair Diana as keen as ourselves riding alongside of us! Yet we remember when Mrs. Grundy objected to ladies in the hunting field, even when the lady was accompanied by her husband, her father or her brother. *Tempora mutantur*. On both sides of the Atlantic English-speaking girls are taught to ride, for the Anglo-Saxon race has decided that its daughters should not be treated as hot-house plants. We want our female relations to be our companions in the hunting-field, as they are our companions in our homes; and the lady who can hold her own in the first flight with hounds gains more respectful admiration than the painted doll who was popularly supposed to be the belle of Mayfair during the London season.

Let us conclude with the stirring words of Mr. W. Phillpotts Williams:

Welcome the chase with its balmy November!

Welcome the colors of scarlet and gray!
Welcome the friends that we meet and remember,

Year after year on our opening day!
Blame me not, reader, nor say I'm romancing;

Phantom-shaped horsemen I seem to discern

Riding among the gay squadron, advancing,

Each one equipped for the chase in his turn;

Close by the side of each sportsman is riding

The shade of some friend who has loved him in chase,

Rousing him, helping him, stirring and guiding

The hunter who bears him with mettle and grace.



REBELLION

NOT yet content, dark spirit of my fate?
 What shall appease thy thirst of sacrifice?
 What more demandest thou to glut thy hate?
 What will thy cunning weave of new device?
 Still blow on blow in unrelenting mood?
 And empty hope that mocks me at thy will?
 Hath thy revenge no hour of lassitude,
 And can thy fury never find its fill?
 Would I might drug thee! just for one brief breath
 Woo thee apart and soothe thee at my knee
 In sleep, that tender counterfeit of death—
 And dream that thou wast tired and I was free.
 Nay, tiger-eyed! swift at thy furtive feast,
 I dare not lure thee, thou wilt have thy own!
 Yet do thy worst! the imprint of the beast
 Can never reach my heart, where, turned to stone,
 There smiles a God e'en thou shalt not dethrone.

JULIEN GORDON.



THE RUSH SEASON

“WHY don't you take the pledge?”
 “Too many other things to take!”



INDEFINITE

COLLECTOR—Mr. Hangback promised he would certainly pay up by the
 first of the year.
 BUSINESS MAN—H'm! did he specify what year?



“THE WORLD IS MINE!”

“I SEE the people in Mars have stopped signaling.”
 “Yes, they're afraid of attracting J. Pierpont Morgan's attention.”

A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY, 1902

By Francis M. Livingston

SCENE: *The Cortlandt street station, Sixth avenue line of the Manhattan Elevated Railway, as a train rushes up. You and I, two decent-looking, gray-haired, elderly gentlemen, who might have been run out of the same mould, but strangers to each other, enter the same car and take seats side by side, with our backs to the motor.*

YOU

I beg pardon, sir; is this a Harlem train?

I

I'm sorry I did not observe, sir—indeed, I was about to ask you the same question.

YOU

I wanted a Fifty-eighth street train, but of course I can change if this one is for Harlem.

I

I also want a Fifty-eighth street train. Well, we'll find out what this is by the time we get to Fiftieth street, anyhow.

YOU

Oh, yes, of course.

THE GUARD (*shouting in at door of car*)
Park Place!

You open your Evening Post, and I look out of the window. During the next ten minutes the silence is broken only by the rattle of the train and the monotonous voice of the guard calling the different stations. At Eighth street there enters a spruce young man about twenty-three years old, fashionably attired, wearing a top hat and a violet

boutonniere in the lapel of his frock coat. With him is a woman some years his senior. She also is smartly dressed, but is heavy of figure and plain of face.

HE (*moving with brisk step and alert eye down the aisle and stopping at the double seat back of You and Me*)

Ah, here are two nice seats—just suit us. Funny how I always seem to get just what I want. Must be lucky.

SHE

Or perhaps deserving.

HE

Well, let's compromise and say enterprising.

SHE (*smiling as if he had said something very clever*)

Yes, we'll agree on that.

HE

Sit next the window. That's it.

He removes her wrap, his hand lingering an instant on her shoulder in the most delicately caressing manner. He then takes off his high hat and sits beside her. They are back to back to You and Me.

SHE

I wonder if this is a Harlem train.

HE

I don't know—I didn't notice.

SHE

I thought you were one of those who noticed everything.

HE

So I do, ordinarily, but this afternoon I have eyes for but one thing. *(He looks boldly and expressively into her face. She colors, but is distinctly pleased.)*

SHE *(trying to hide her confusion)*

I don't know why I asked whether this is a Harlem train. Of course, it makes no difference.

HE

But perhaps it does make a difference.

SHE

How so?

HE

It may not now, but perhaps it will later. A great deal sometimes hangs on—

THE GUARD

Fourteenth street!

HE

—a little thing.

SHE

How odd you are! I like odd people, though.

HE

So glad!

SHE

Why?

HE

Because you said you liked me.

SHE

But I didn't say just that.

HE

Oh, I misunderstood, then.

SHE

Well, I *do* like you, you're odd and—and—entertaining.

HE *(leaning a little nearer)*

Did you enjoy the reception this afternoon?

SHE

Oh, so much. Didn't you?

HE

Yes, *you* were there. *(A little pause.)* Ordinarily I think the Van Cleeves

and all the Washington Square contingent are stupid. They're so fearfully respectable. They're just like your aunts.

SHE

Why, *Mister* Colt, aren't you dreadful, to speak so disrespectfully of my aunts!

you *(turning from a close scrutiny of the couple)*

"Mr. Colt"—I thought that young chap looked familiar. He's a clerk in the office of a promoter across the hall from me in the Empire Building.

SHE

Everybody else is afraid of them.

HE

Oh, I respect them greatly, Miss Barnwell; why shouldn't I?—two venerable single ladies who date back to Hendrik Hudson; but as for being afraid of them *(meaningly)*—there's only one person in the world of whom I'm really afraid.

I *(reversing my head)*

"Miss Barnwell"—I know that girl now—I couldn't place her at first.

YOU

Girl? She's thirty-two if she's a day.

I

Well, she's an unmarried woman and young enough to be my daughter, or yours; that's why I call her a girl. She's a great heiress. You must remember old Alex Barnwell, who died two years ago, and the fearful row there was over his will? This was his favorite niece—named after him. She came in for four millions. She got it, too. Lives with two old-maid aunts in Fifty-second street, just off the Avenue.

SHE

What will they say at my running off like this? I ought not to have done it.

HE

That will be all right. I left word for them, you know. It must seem

funny for you to be riding in an elevated train.

SHE

It does—it's quite a lark. I haven't been in one for two years.

HE

And I ride on one twice a day—Ninety-third street to Rector, and back.

SHE

Fancy! (*Looks at him with wonder, not unmingled with admiration.*)

HE

Oh, I'll ride in an automobile one day

SHE (*earnestly*)

I don't in the least doubt it.

YOU

Cheeky cuss!

I

She likes it, though.

YOU

Oh, of course; all women do.

HE

Miss Alexina (*she starts*), it was good of you to come with me to-day. I appreciate your trust in me. There is something I want to tell you; I'd be glad of this opportunity did not one thing stand in the way.

THE GUARD

Eighteenth street!

HE

Do you know what it is? Do you know the only thing that keeps me from telling you how very dear you are to me? (*He leans quite near to her.*)

SHE (*clasping her hands tightly, looking down and blushing deeply*)

I suppose it is my—my—

HE (*very tenderly*)

Yes?

SHE

My—my—fortune.

HE (*indignantly, withdrawing a little*)

Your *what?*—your fortune? Pooh! I'd forgotten you had one. Your fortune, indeed!

SHE (*distressed*)

Oh, I am so sorry—I did not mean—it wasn't nice of me, but you said—I thought—

HE (*softly*)

I know—I am not angry. But it isn't that. It is—well, yes, I might call it your fortune, and what a fortune! A pair of eyes, the most beautiful blue in the world, out of which looks a true, womanly soul; a sweet, gentle mouth, soft, brown hair, rippling over a pretty white forehead—

SHE

Ah, Mr. Colt, don't say that! I know I'm not pretty!

YOU

She's right there. She's plain as a pikestaff.

I

She's very far from a pikestaff at this minute. Can you see how she is flushing and dimpling? Can you see those shining eyes? On my soul, I think she believes the beggar!

YOU

I'm sure she does. I think he has hold of her hand.

I

And she's letting him hold it.

HE

It is my unworthiness to aspire to these riches I have just described to you—that is the only obstacle I acknowledge, Alexina; as for anything else, dear, if you stood on the other side of—

THE GUARD

Twenty-third street!

HE

—the world, and I stood here, I should know you were there and seek you out. If you were imprisoned behind stone walls I should scale them

gaily. Were you a poor girl in a shop or a factory, what would it matter? I could offer you a little home——

YOU

He lives in a hall bedroom in a Harlem boarding-house!

HE

There would be enough for two——

YOU

His salary is eighteen per.

HE

What, then, should intervene to keep us apart, when I love you so fondly, and you, I believe, might care for me? Your money—what does that amount to? Am I, who fear nothing in the world but your displeasure, to hesitate and tremble at the possibility of Trifling Tom or Disappointed Dick or Helpless Harry calling me a fortune-hunter? Pooh! what do I care? The woman I love would believe in me, the rest of the world could go hang. My fortune lies here—and here (*he touches his head—his heart*). I am not ashamed to lay it at your feet.

SHE

It isn't as if I had only myself to—to think of; my—my aunts would never——

HE

Ah, those terrible aunts! No, Alexina, they would never, I grant it. With love, youth and ambition those estimable virgins have little concern. They would marry you to old Peter Stolz, his money and his rheumatism, or to that antique Charlie Van Cleeve, with his simper, his ancestors and his Chemical Bank stock. Alexina, listen. You are young, but you are a girl of great intelligence and force of character.

YOU

Can you hear him?

I

Perfectly.

YOU

Isn't he a wonder!

HE

Is this wealth to be a blessing to you, or is it to shut you out from——

THE GUARD

Twenty-eighth street!

HE

—the greatest joys life can offer?

SHE

I have always hoped, ever since I had it, that—that——

HE

That you would be your own mistress, that you would come and go and live and wed as you liked. Certainly. If you are to be only a factor in piling one big fortune on another big fortune, to see how huge a heap of gold can be made, of what benefit is your wealth to you? Dear, take it and build a hospital, or endow a home for the purblind, the imbecile and the indigent. Don't let it spoil both our lives!

SHE

But I don't want to endow a home!

HE

Then spend it, Alexina! Buy gowns and jewels and yachts—travel, live, enjoy—the woman I love is to be allowed to do exactly as she pleases in all things.

SHE

I never dreamed that you cared for me—at least, not until—until recently.

HE

And now that I have told you, what will you say in reply?

SHE

If only it were not for——

HE

Ha! let me settle them now. Alexina, you need never fear them again. Listen to me, dear. Up where I live—at my boarding-house up-town, the landlady is the dearest, most

motherly soul imaginable. She thinks the world of me—like a second mother. Her brother, who lives there, too, is a Baptist minister of some sort. You and I will just ride up there now, and be quietly married in the back parlor by the minister, with the motherly landlady and her son for witnesses.

I

Good heavens! why, this is——

THE GUARD

Thirty-third street!

I

—growing serious!

YOU

It is certainly growing interesting.

SHE

Oh, Mr. Colt, you take my breath away!

HE

Don't say "Mr. Colt"—call me Ernest. Then, as soon as we're married, we'll drive down to Fifty-second street, and get there just as Aunt Charlotte and Aunt Katrina are sitting down to dinner.

SHE

Oh!

HE

You won't fear them when you have your husband by your side. I'll talk to them. You won't have to say a word, dear.

I

On my word, sir, I think it's about time to interfere. I knew Alex Barnwell, and——

YOU

Don't you do it, sir—it's none of your business—pardon me—or mine. Damme, sir, I say let the boy have her if he can get her. He deserves her, and he'll do better by her than a putty-faced Dago count or an empty-headed old New York beau would. That's the fate her aunts intend her for, I take it.

I

But don't you see the man's an adventurer, sir?

YOU

Yes, and a brave one. Let him venture—she's old enough to take care of herself.

HE

Well, dearest?

SHE

How could I ever do anything so—so——

HE

So courageous? Alexina, dear, you and I are at——

THE GUARD

Forty-second street!

HE

—the parting of the ways. On one road are Peter Stolz, Charlie Van Cleeve, Aunt Charlotte and Aunt Katrina. The other road leads to liberty and happiness, and Love points the way. It is a golden moment. Choose, Alexina!

SHE

Oh, we are almost at my station! (*Looking nervously about.*) How can I answer you now?

HE

Choose, Alexina!

SHE

But, Mr. Colt——

HE

Ernest.

SHE

Ernest—I—I——

HE

Do you love me?

SHE

Ah, you can ask me that?

HE

Then tell me so. I cannot live without you—you can never be happy away from me.

THE SMART SET

A pause of a few moments. He holds both her hands, never taking his eyes from her face.

SHE (*very softly*)

Ernest—

THE GUARD

Fiftieth street!

You and I here stretch our necks almost to the point of dislocation, and as she leans toward him we see rather than hear her answer.

SHE

Ernest, I love you, and I will follow you to—

THE GUARD

H-a-a-a-r-l-e-e-e-m! Harlem train! Change here for Fifty-eighth street!

SHE

—the end of the world.

You and I sit motionless, as if spell-bound, for a moment or two. I recover first, and leap for the aisle, stumbling over your feet and almost falling flat. As I regain my equilibrium you lurch against me, and we both nearly fall again. Together we go careening down the aisle toward the door, trampling toes and plunging against incoming passengers. We are followed by cries of pain and rage.

THE GUARD (*who is just closing gate*)

Hey, what's up there? Step lively, gents—both feet—ah, look out now!

He opens the gate and we tumble off the moving train to the platform.

I (*staggering to my feet, picking up my hat and speaking in a bewildered manner*)

Why—why—it was a Harlem train, wasn't it?

YOU (*sarcastically, as you brush the knees of your trousers*)

If you have any lingering doubts on that score, I can inform you that it was.

I

Did—did—*she* get off?

YOU (*sardonically*)

What do you think?

The departing train swings westward and heads straight for a glory of golden, rose and violet sunset.

I (*indignantly, recovering my wits*)

It is for me to ask what you think, sir, of that scandalous performance which you and I just witnessed.

YOU (*slowly and meditatively, as you gaze up the line*)

What do I think? I think this is a great, a wonderful world, and that the whole thing, with all its greatness and its wonders, is the rightful heritage of that young man and his like.

THE TICKET-CHOPPER

Fifty-eighth street train!



THE HAPPY DECEASED

MRS. WEEDS—Do you think I look well in my new mourning, Nora?

MAID—Shure, ma'am, it is any man would be proud to have such a beautiful widow!



MANILA ROPE

“THAT was a peculiar suicide of Smithers.”

“How was that?”

“He killed himself with the cigars his wife gave him at Christmas.”

“Did he hang himself?”

THE LOTOS AND THE BOTTLE

By O. Henry

THE consul was working leisurely on his yearly report. So many thousand bunches of bananas; so many thousand oranges and cocoanuts; so many ounces of gold dust, pounds of rubber, coffee, indigo and sarsaparilla—actually, both exports and imports were twenty per cent. greater than for the previous year!

A little thrill of satisfaction ran through the consul. Perhaps the State Department, in reading his introduction, would—and then he leaned back in his chair and laughed. He was getting as bad as the rest of them. For the moment he had forgotten that the island of Tagalon is but an insignificant part of an insignificant republic lying along the byways of an unfrequented sea. He thought of the quarantine doctor, who subscribed for the London *Lancet*, expecting to find it reprinting his reports from Tagalon to the New Orleans Board of Health concerning the yellow-fever germ. The consul knew that not one in fifty of his acquaintances in the States had ever heard of Tagalon. He knew that two men, at any rate, would have to read his report—some underling in the State Department and a compositor in the Public Printing Office. Perhaps the typewriter would notice the increase of commerce in Tagalon, and speak of it to an acquaintance.

He had just written, in his introduction, "most unaccountable is the supineness of our large exporters in permitting the French and German houses to practically control the trade interests of this rich and productive—"

when he heard the hoarse tones of a steamer's siren.

Willard Geddie laid down his pen and picked up his Panama hat and umbrella. He strolled out of the consulate and by a devious but shaded way to the beach. The steamer was only the *Valhalla*, one of the regular line of fruit vessels, but half the population of Tagalon had gathered on the beach, according to their custom, to view it. There was no harbor in the island; vessels of the draught of the *Valhalla* anchored a mile from shore.

By reason of long practice the consul gauged his stroll so accurately that by the time he arrived on the beach the Custom House officers had already rowed out and completed their duties, and the ship's gig, bringing ashore the purser, was just grating on the shingle.

At college Geddie had been a treasure as a first-base man. He now closed his umbrella, stuck it upright in the sand, and stooped, his hands resting on his knees. The purser, burlesquing the pitcher's contortions, hurled at him with all his force the heavy roll of newspapers, tied with a string, that the steamer always brought for the consul. Geddie leaped high, and caught the roll with a sounding "thwack." The loungers on the beach laughed and applauded delightedly. Every week they expected that roll to be delivered and received in that same manner, and they were never disappointed. Innovations of any kind did not reach Tagalon.

Geddie rehoisted his umbrella and sauntered back to the consulate—a

two-room wooden structure with a native-built gallery of bamboo and nipa-palm running entirely round it. A somewhat dingy stretch of starred and striped bunting hung from a pole above the door. One room was the official department; furnished chastely with a set of straight-back cane chairs, a bamboo couch and a flat-top desk covered with the papers of state. Pictures of the first and the latest President hung against the wall. The other room was Geddie's living apartment.

It was eleven o'clock when he returned from the beach, and therefore breakfast time. Chanca, the Carib woman who cooked for him, was just serving the meal on a little table on the shady side of the gallery. It consisted of shark's fin soup, aquacates, stew of land crabs, breadfruit, a piece of broiled iguana, a freshly cut pineapple, claret and coffee.

The consul took his seat and unrolled with luxurious laziness his bundle of newspapers. Here in Tagalon for two days he would read of goings on in the world very much as we of the world read those whimsical contributions to inexact science that portray the doings of the Martians. When he had finished with the papers they would be sent on the rounds of the half-dozen English-speaking families on the island.

The paper that came first into his hand chanced to be one of those bulky mattresses of printed stuff on which the readers of certain New York journals are supposed to take their Sabbath nap. Opening this, the consul rested it on the table and the back of a chair. Then he partook of his meal deliberately, turning the leaves from time to time and glancing idly at the contents. Presently he was struck by something familiar in a picture—a half-page badly printed photographic reproduction of a vessel. Languidly interested, he leaned over for a nearer scrutiny and a view of the florid headlines of the printed half-columns below the picture.

Yes, he was not mistaken. The

engraving was of the 800-ton steam yacht *Idalia*, belonging to "that prince of good fellows, Midas of the money market and society's pink of perfection, J. Ward Tolliver."

Slowly sipping his black coffee, Geddie read the lines beneath the picture. Following a listed statement of Mr. Tolliver's real estate and bonds came a description of the yacht's furnishings, and then the grain of news, no bigger than a mustard seed. Mr. Tolliver, with a party of invited guests, would sail the next day on a six weeks' cruise along the Central and South American coast and among the Bahama Islands. Among the guests were Mrs. Cumberland Payne and Miss Ida Payne, of Norfolk.

The writer, with the fatuous presumption of his ilk, had concocted a romance suited to the palates of his readers. He bracketed the names of Miss Payne and Mr. Tolliver, and all but read the marriage ceremony over them. He played coyly and insinuatingly on the strings of "*on dit*," "a little bird," "Madame Rumor" and "no one would be surprised," and ended with congratulations.

Geddie, having finished his breakfast, took his papers to the west gallery and sat there in his favorite steamer chair, with his feet on the bamboo railing. He lighted a cigar and looked out over the sea. He felt a glow of satisfaction at finding that he was so little disturbed by what he had read. Yes, he had conquered it. He could never forget Ida; but there was no longer any pain in thinking of her. When they had had that quarrel he had impulsively sought and obtained this far-off consulship, filled only with the desire to retaliate on her by detaching himself from her world and presence. He had succeeded thoroughly in the latter. For eighteen months he had been consul at Tagalon, and no word had passed between them. He sometimes heard briefly of her through his dilatory correspondence with the few friends to whom he still wrote. He could not suppress a little thrill of satisfaction that she had not yet married

Tolliver or anyone else. But evidently Tolliver had not given up hope.

Well, it made no difference to him now. He had eaten of the lotos. He was happy and content in this land of perpetual afternoon. Those old days of eager life in the States seemed like an irritating dream. He hoped Ida would be as happy as he was. This climate, as balmy as that of distant Avalon; the fetterless, idyllic round of enchanted days; the life among this romantic, indolent people, full of music and flowers and low laughter; the witchery of the imminent sea and mountains, and the many shapes of love and magic and beauty that bloomed in the white tropic nights—with all he was more than content. Also, there was Paula O'Brannigan.

Geddie intended to marry Paula—if, of course, she would consent; but he was rather sure of her feeling toward him. Somehow he kept postponing his proposal. Several times he was quite near to it, but a mysterious something held him back. Perhaps it was only the unconscious conviction that the act would sever the last tie that bound him to his old world.

He could be very happy with Paula. None of the island girls could compare with her. She had spent two years at school in the States, and when she chose no one could detect any difference between her and the girls in Norfolk or Manhattan. But it was delicious to see her at home, dressed, as she sometimes was, in the native costume, with bare shoulders and flowing sleeves.

Barnard O'Brannigan was the great merchant of Tagalon. He was more than well-to-do, living in a house of two stories, with furniture imported, every stick of it, from New Orleans. Paula's mother was a native lady of high Castilian descent, but with a tinge of brown showing through her olive cheek. The union of the Irish and Spanish had produced—as it so often has—an offshoot of rare beauty and vivacity. They were excellent

people indeed, and the upper story of their house was ready to be placed at the service of Geddie and Paula as soon as he should make up his mind to speak about it.

In a couple of hours the consul tired of reading. The papers lay scattered about him on the gallery. Reclining there, he looked out on a veritable Eden. A clump of banana plants interposed their broad shields between him and the sun. The gentle slope from the consulate to the sea was covered with the dark-green foliage of lemon and orange trees just bursting into bloom. A lagoon pierced the land like a dark, jagged crystal, and above it pale ceiba trees rose almost to the clouds. The waving cocoanut-palm leaves on the beach flared a decorative green against the slate of an almost quiescent sea. His senses were cognizant of brilliant scarlets and ochres amid the *vert* of the coppice, of odors of fruit and bloom and the smoke from Chanca's clay oven under the calabash tree, of the treble laughter of the native women in the huts, the song of a robin, the salt taste of the breeze, the diminuendo of the faint surf running along the shore, and, gradually, of a white speck, growing to a blur, that intruded itself upon the slaty prospect of the sea.

Lazily interested, he watched this blur increase until it became the *Idalia*, steaming at full speed, coming down the coast. Without changing his position he kept his eyes on the beautiful white yacht, gliding swiftly nearer until she came opposite the little village of Tagalon. Then, sitting upright, he saw her float steadily past and on. Scarcely a mile of sea had separated her from the shore. He had seen the frequent flash of her polished brasswork and the stripes of her deck awnings—so much and no more. Like a ship on a magic slide, the *Idalia* had crossed the illuminated circle of the consul's little world and was gone. Save for the tiny cloud of smoke that she left hanging over the brim of the sea, she might have been an im-

material thing—a chimera of his idle brain.

Geddie went into his office and sat down to dawdle over his report. If the reading of the article in the paper had left him unshaken, this silent passing of the *Idalia* had done for him still more. It had brought the calm and peace of a situation from which all uncertainty had been eradicated. He knew that men sometimes hope without being aware of it. Now, since she had come two thousand miles and had passed without a sign, not even his unconscious self need cling to the past any longer.

After dinner, when the sun was low, Geddie walked on the little strip of beach under the cocoanuts. The wind was blowing landward, and the sea was covered with tiny ripples.

A miniature breaker, spreading with a soft "swish" on the sand, carried with it something round and shining that rolled back again as the wave receded. The next influx beached it again, and Geddie picked it up. It was a long-necked wine bottle of clear glass. The cork had been driven in tightly, level with the mouth, and the end covered with dark-red sealing wax. The bottle contained what appeared to be a sheet of paper, half-curved from the manipulation it had undergone while being inserted. In the sealing wax was the impression of a signet ring that Geddie knew well—a ring that Ida Payne always wore in preference to jewels of any sort. As Geddie looked at the familiar monogram of the letters, I. P., a queer sensation of disquietude went over him. More personal and intimate was this reminder of her than had been the sight of the vessel she was on. He took the bottle to his house and set it on his desk.

Throwing off his hat and coat, and lighting a lamp, for the night had crowded precipitately on the brief twilight, he began to examine his piece of sea salvage.

By holding the bottle near the light and turning it judiciously he made out that it contained a double sheet

of note paper filled with close writing; further, that it was of the size and color that Ida always used, and that, to the best of his belief, the handwriting was hers. The imperfect glass of the bottle distorted the rays of light, so that he could read no word of the writing; but certain capital letters, of which he caught comprehensive glimpses, were Ida's, he felt sure.

There was a little amused smile in Geddie's eyes as he set the bottle down and laid three cigars side by side on the desk. He fetched his steamer chair from the gallery and stretched himself on it comfortably. He would smoke those three cigars while considering the problem.

For it amounted to a problem. He wished he had not found the bottle; but the bottle was there. Why should it have drifted in from the sea, whence come so many disordering things, to disturb his peace?

In this dreamy land, where time seemed so redundant, he had fallen into the habit of bestowing much thought on unimportant matters.

He began to try himself with many fanciful theories concerning the story of the bottle, disposing of each in turn. Ships in danger of wreck or disablement generally sent such things out. But he had seen the *Idalia* not three hours before, safe and speeding. Girls at sea had been known thus to distribute bottled messages, in gratification of a mild and harmless sort of humor. But it was not characteristic of Ida to do such a thing. Suppose the crew had mutinied and imprisoned the passengers below, and the message was one begging for succor? But, premising such an improbable thing, would the agitated captives have taken the pains to fill four pages of note paper with carefully penned arguments for rescue?

Thus, by the process of elimination, he soon rid the matter of the more unlikely theories, and was—though aversely—reduced to the less assailable one, that the bottle contained a message to himself. She knew he was there; it must have

been launched as the yacht was passing and the wind blowing fairly toward shore.

As soon as Geddie reached this half-conclusion a wrinkle came between his brows and a stubborn look settled round his mouth. He sat looking out at the giant fireflies traversing the narrow, grass-grown streets.

If this was a message from Ida to him, what could it be save an overture toward a reconciliation? And if that, why had she not used the safe methods of the post instead of this uncertain and even flippant means? A note in an empty bottle, cast into the sea! There was something light and frivolous about it, if not actually contemptuous.

The thought stirred his pride and subdued whatever emotions had been resurrected by the finding of the bottle.

Geddie put on his coat and hat and walked out. He followed a street that led him along the border of a little plaza, where a band was playing and people were rambling care-free and happy. Some timorous señoritas scurrying past, with fireflies tangled in the jetty braids of their hair, glanced at him with dark, provocative eyes. The air was languorous with the scent of jasmine and orange blossoms.

The consul stayed his steps at the house of Barnard O'Brannigan. Paula was swinging in a hammock on the gallery. She rose from it like a bird from its nest. The color came to her cheek at the sound of Geddie's voice.

He was charmed at the sight of her costume—a flounced muslin dress, with a little jacket of white flannel, all made with neatness and style. He suggested a walk, and they went to the old Indian well on the hill road. They sat on the curb, and there Geddie spoke. Certain though he had been that she would not say him nay, he was thrilled with joy at the completeness of her surrender. Here was a heart made for love and steadfastness. No caprice or questioning or captious standards of conventions here.

When Geddie kissed Paula at her door that night and walked toward his own house he was happier than he had ever been before. "Here in this hollow lotos land to ever live and lie reclined," seemed to him, as it has seemed to many mariners, the best as well as the easiest. His future would be an ideal one. He had attained a paradise without a serpent. His Eve was indeed a part of him, unbeguiled, and, therefore, more beguiling. It would be a happy day when he would cut that last slender filament that reached across the sea. Here should be Willard Geddie's home and his future. He had decided that to-night, and his heart was full of a serene, assured content.

Geddie went into his house whistling that finest and saddest love song, "La Goloudrina." At the door his tame monkey leaped down from his shelf and looked up at him, chattering briskly. The consul turned to his desk to get him some nuts he usually kept there. Reaching in the half-darkness, his hand struck against the bottle. He had forgotten it was there. Geddie was either startled or reminded into giving vent to something very near a mild oath.

He lighted the lamp and fed the monkey; then he took the bottle in his hand and walked down the path to the beach.

There was a moon, and the sea was glorious. The breeze had shifted, as it did each evening, and was now rushing steadily seaward.

Stepping to the water's edge, Geddie hurled the bottle far out into the sea. It disappeared for a moment and then shot upward twice its length above the water. Geddie stood watching it. The moonlight was so bright he could see it bobbing up and down with the little waves. Slowly it receded from the shore, flashing and turning as it went. The wind was carrying it out to sea. Soon it became a mere black speck, doubtfully discerned at irregular intervals, and then the mystery of it was swallowed up by the mystery of the ocean. Ged-

die stood on the beach, smoking, and looking out across the water.

Old Simon Early was a half-breed fisherman living in a hut close to the shore. He owned the sloop *Pajaro*, that was anchored in a little cove to windward.

Simon was wakened from his earliest nap by a voice calling him. Slipping on his shoes, he went outside. He saw one of the boats from the *Valhalla* just landing on the beach. His name was called again, and he went down to the boat. The third mate of the *Valhalla*, an acquaintance of Simon, was there with three sailors from the fruiter.

"Go up, Simon," said the mate, "and tell Dr. Parrish, at the hotel, or Mr. Wellesly, or anybody else you can think of that's a friend to Mr. Geddie, the consul, to come here right away."

"Saints of the skies!" said Simon, sleepily, "nothing has happened to Mr. Geddie?"

"He's under that tarpauling," said the mate, pointing to the boat, "and he's rather more than half-drowned. We seen him from the *Valhalla* nearly a mile out from shore, swimmin' like mad after a bottle that was floatin' on the water, outward bound. We lowered the gig and started for him. He nearly had his hand on the bottle when he give out and went under. We pulled him out in time to save him, maybe, but the doctor is the man to decide that."

"A bottle!" said the old man, rubbing his eyes. He was not yet fully awakened. "Where is the bottle?"

"Driftin' on out there some'eres," said the mate, jerking his thumb toward the sea. "Get on with you, Simon."



TO A VIOLIN

(ANTONIO STRADIVARI, 1685)

WHAT flights of years have gone to fashion thee,
 My violin! What centuries have wrought
 Thy sounding fibres! What dead fingers taught
 Thy music to awake in ecstasy
 Beyond our human dreams? Thy melody
 Is resurrection. Every buried thought
 Of singing bird, or stream, or south wind fraught
 With tender message, or of sobbing sea
 Lives once again. The tempest's solemn roll
 Is in thy passion sleeping, till the king
 Whose touch is mastery shall sound thy soul.
 The organ tones of ocean shalt thou bring,
 The crashing chords of thunder, and the whole
 Vast harmony of God. Ah, Spirit, sing!

KATHERINE LA FARGE NORTON.



HER INEVITABLE CHOICE

"WHY are you so sure your wife will want an automobile for Christmas?"
 "Why, there isn't anything that costs more, is there?"

“TIES OF AULD LANG SYNE”

By Ethel Watts Mumford

SHE was a handsome, middle-aged woman, with prematurely white hair, and carried herself with a proud self-reliance that was accentuated by the firm contour of her jaw. So much the first glance would have shown you; the second would have revealed eyes softened by tears, a mouth made flexible and human by experience, and if you happen to be a woman, you would have noted her exquisite tailor-made gown and the richness of her sable collar.

She entered the cable car at Tenth street with the uneasy step of one unaccustomed to such modes of conveyance. Not a seat was vacant and even the available standing room was rapidly being taken up. An expression half-patient, half-disappointed crossed her aristocratic face, but was rapidly changed to one of strained anxiety as the car bounded and bucked up Broadway.

“Madam,” said a voice at her side, “oblige me by taking this seat.”

She turned gratefully toward the speaker, a tall man with iron-gray hair, distinguished bearing and a jaw as determined as her own. Her eyes of velvet-brown met his of steady blue. “Fred!” she gasped, letting go the strap to which she had been clinging. The car lurched and she fell into her benefactor’s arms.

“Ellen!” he exclaimed, catching her as he steadied himself against the door.

The other passengers looked up, and puzzled smiles flitted from face to face. The strangely united couple separated awkwardly; an embarrassed silence ensued and was followed by a conversation even more self-conscious.

“You are looking well,” she observed, distantly, but with a hot flush burning her cheeks.

“Yes,” he answered, pulling at his mustache savagely; “I am quite—I may say perfectly—well. And you?—but it is needless to ask.”

“Thank you, quite well.” She attempted a smile that died painfully, and he hastened to speak again.

“You are in town late this year. I thought—er—you spent your Winters in Santa Barbara—”

“Yes,” she interrupted, “usually. Berkley is there now—he loves the polo and wouldn’t miss a game. I stayed later this year to see the Mitchells on their return from Europe. Is—is—” and she faltered a little—“Dudley well?” The yearning that came into her eyes was beyond her control.

“Would you,” he said, hesitatingly, “would you take afternoon tea with me at the Waldorf?—we are almost there. We can talk—er—of Berkley.”

She hesitated a moment and nodded. “Yes—of Berkley and Dudley. I think,” she glanced at the jeweled watch that hung at her belt, “we have time.”

“Thank you,” he said, with grave courtesy.

Stopping the car at the next crossing he assisted her to alight, while the interested passengers stared and commented.

It was growing dark, and a fine snow, the first of the season, was powdering the passing throng and adding its white blur to the growing darkness. With an almost boyish diffidence he offered her his arm, and with a deepening flush she accept-

ed it. A short block brought them to the brilliantly lighted doors of the hotel, and a moment later they had settled themselves before a tiny corner table, surrounded by a chattering, tea-drinking throng, interspersed with palms backgrounded by walls of a cool, cream-colored tone, domed in with glass and gold. In spite of her composure the lady's brown eyes traveled anxiously and almost guiltily over the occupants of the room. Wonder of wonders! not a woman of her acquaintance was to be seen. Her companion stared about him as if the scene were a novelty.

"Pretty room, this," he commented.

She started. It seemed strange that he should not know surroundings so familiar to every New Yorker. Then she recalled the many years that had elapsed since she had last seen him—since he had last seen his native land. She launched forth into idle comment, wondering at her frivolity while her heart beat painfully, foolishly against the expensive tailor jacket. When their orders were filled and the obsequious waiter had retired to a distance, silence fell between them.

"Mrs.—er—Van Baugh—no, I simply can't call you that, Ellen," he broke off. "Here is a new picture of Dudley, taken just before I left England." He drew a photograph from his pocket and handed it to her.

She fairly snatched it and held it gloatingly before her.

"How handsome!" she said, proudly; "he has your eyes."

"He is very like you, though," he observed, "and grows more so every day. He reminds me of you in countless little ways, habits and expressions—nameless things that make individuality."

She raised her eyes to his from the absorbing contemplation of the photograph. "Do you know," she exclaimed, impulsively, "that's just the way it is with Berkley. He looks like me, but he is you in all the details—it quite startles me. And his voice—often and often when I've heard him speaking outside the room,

in the halls and on the veranda, I have fairly jumped, thinking it was you."

"Strange!" he murmured. "Is he—er—good-looking, a presentable sort of chap? The picture you sent—of course—but—"

Her face lighted up beautifully. "The best and handsomest boy in America! and," warming to her subject, "you should see him ride; he is so popular, and has such good brain and judgment! He has taken the whole control of the Monticito ranch for the past three years and been splendidly successful! He has only one fault; he is stubborn—like—" In spite of herself there was a little reproach in her voice.

"His mother," he put in, with a harsh note.

"I was going to say his father," she answered, the soft lines of her mouth getting the better of her resolute chin; "but I'll say like—his parents."

He laughed uncomfortably. "You have changed a great deal, Ellen," he said at last.

"And you?—haven't you changed, too?"

"Yes," he said, slowly, "yes—I think you would find me not quite—as—as—"

"Say firm," she suggested.

"Yes—let's *say* firm—thank you," he nodded; "and you certainly—"

"Are not so—" she smiled, almost coquettishly.

"Wilful," he put in.

"Perhaps—wilful," she acquiesced.

"I don't mind paying the piper," he said, apparently at random and after a moment's absorbed contemplation of his companion's slim fingers as they nervously twisted and untwisted her old-fashioned gold lorgnette chain, "but the piper is so unreasonable in his charges."

She laughed outright. "Yes, I've noticed he never asks any of us what we think fair—and, well, I suppose it is our business to make terms in advance."

He looked up at her admiringly. "You always were a comfort, Ellen,

because a fellow didn't have to drive an idea into your head with a drill. On my word, I used to miss that ready wit of yours, particularly in England; that's one reason I stayed there. I felt quite sure I should never marry again."

"And experience had taught you the meaning of single blessedness?" she asked, with a touch of sadness in her warm voice.

"I used to think so," he answered, "but of late years—I have begun to doubt—even myself."

"It would be better if we could only reach that stage of wisdom earlier, wouldn't it?" she smiled.

"Has life been kind to you?" he asked, suddenly, changing the subject as he took note of her saddened eyes and the softened curve of the severe lips he remembered so well.

She looked absently at the grounds in her teacup. "Ye—es," she answered, hesitatingly; "I have had all the world has to give."

"I didn't ask you," he rejoined, "how the world has treated you—I asked has life been kind."

"Is life ever kind?" she questioned in turn.

"I don't know. I think it might be," he said. "I'll be frank, though—it's been confounded lonely to me!"

A quick look of understanding flashed from her eyes—the look that comes of common experience. "I know," she said, and began slowly

tipping the contents of her cup from side to side.

"Ellen," he spoke low, and his voice trembled—"Ellen, let's try it again! It won't be so lonely—and—I am less firm—and you are less wilful—so perhaps—"

She still shook the tea grounds, but with an unsteady hand.

"Well, we might try," she said, softly.

The sun shone clear on the eucalyptus avenues of Santa Barbara. The blue hills of the Coast range hung unreal as the painted "drop" of a stage scene, and the dusty palms whispered answers to the humming tones of the Pacific.

Berkley Graves drew up his foam-flecked pony before the clubhouse and accosted a trim little Englishman on a trim little mare.

"Say, Champ, old chap, I'm dreadfully sorry, but I can't play in match. The fact is," and here a brilliant smile lighted up and made lovable his reckless, determined face, "I'm going on to New York to see my father and mother married."

"Oh, by Jove!" and the neat little Englishman dropped his reins in amazement.

"Been divorced twenty years," Graves explained.

"Oh, by Jove!" exclaimed the Englishman again. "How charmingly American!"



HYPERÆSTHETIC

A DANDY whose fad was pajamas
Wore a set made of wool from two llamas;
The unmanly effect
Made many suspect
That the outfit was really his mamma's.

COMMAD POST.



THE wise man not only doesn't believe all he hears, but he doesn't hear all he believes.

THE ACCOUNTING

LEAVE me in penury awhile to weep
 If I have overdrawn from our sweet hoard;
 Let me not squander treasures gathered toward
 A Wintry future's want, nor grasp too deep
 To reach the wealth thy wiser soul would keep;
 Nor to my lavish ecstasy afford
 Our dedicated opulences stored
 For our slow need where silent shadows sleep.

Oh, ghastly creditors are in the gloom
 Within the voiceless spaces of the room,
 But dusk doth strangely rob them from my sight;
 And Silence in the brooding Heaven hears
 All the dark day the drip of counted tears,
 For every kiss thou gavest in the night.

FLORENCE BROOKS.



LOVE'S SACRIFICE

"I SHALL have to give you up!" It was in the year 1955, and as he spoke the youthful scion of a once noble house buried his face in his hands and groaned aloud. "Yes," he said, "my darling, much as I love you, I cannot subject you to all the privations that a marriage in my present circumstances would entail on my wife. Three weeks ago I was rich and prosperous, the head of a large syndicate that my father had bequeathed to me, and on the most familiar and intimate terms with the Emperor. Nothing, it seemed, stood in the way of my continued success. Suddenly, however, another syndicate loomed above me, and I was quickly overshadowed. And now, after having been obliged to sell out, I find that all my earthly possessions amount only to the paltry sum of eight millions and a half."

The girl at his side never wavered, but, firm and resolute, her voice betraying the great love and determination that animated her in spite of this terrible blow, she rushed to her disconsolate lover and threw her arms round his neck.

"My own dearest," she cried, passionately, "why, I would marry you if you were worth no more than a million!"

TOM MASSON.



VERY APPROPRIATE

"WHAT did he get \$300 back pension for?"
 "Oh, he was shot in the back."

THE SECRET PANEL

By Countess Loveau de Chavanne

IT was the Carnival, and all Paris was alive with gaiety, that appeared to increase with the approach of the Lenten season. The rich and retired banker, Monsieur Langlois, was seated before the wood fire that shed its bright glow throughout his luxurious library. Beside Langlois was his intimate friend, Monsieur de Marans. It was near midnight, and their conversation had gradually lapsed into silence.

"My dear Langlois," said de Marans, after a pause, "I do not understand the opposition you extend to the marriage of your son to Mademoiselle de Villier; she is young and rich and very beautiful, and in all respects desirable; the young people love each other, and——"

"It is not I who oppose," interrupted Langlois; "it is Madame Langlois."

"But for what reason? Surely you can explain?"

"I can," replied Langlois, moodily, "and yet, you know, she has refused to give any explanation, saying only that she will not consent to the marriage."

"Well, Langlois," continued de Marans, earnestly, "I have always known you to be a wise and prudent man, therefore forgive me if I add that I cannot excuse a man of your age for entertaining a feeling of jealousy."

"Jealousy!" exclaimed his listener, in surprise.

"Yes, jealousy," repeated de Marans, "for with your prudence you would, ere this, have sought to win the consent of your wife to so desira-

ble a union, were it not that the old jealousy of the father of Mademoiselle de Villier still troubles you."

"I am not jealous," replied Langlois. "My wife comes and goes at will. You yourself saw her depart this evening for the Opéra ball, and unaccompanied by me."

"But why not? What in heaven's name would tempt you to spy on the actions of a woman of fifty, unless you wish to become the laughing stock of all Paris? Twenty years of jealous folly is enough."

"True; but I love my wife."

"Yes; and that great love, which I do not blame you for, has given Madame Langlois a control over you of which she takes much advantage."

"Then you think me very weak?"

"Yes, so weak that I scarcely believe you really know the motive that prompts your wife."

"Oh, yes, I do," was the calm response.

"If so, give me proof of it," added de Marans.

"You will laugh when I tell you," continued Langlois. "She cannot do otherwise than refuse, and I will not say a single word; yet the whole thing is in a dish of macaroni."

De Marans withdrew his chair and gazed with unfeigned surprise at his friend.

"In a dish of macaroni?" he repeated. "Forgive me, my friend, if I ask if you are in your sane mind."

"Perfectly," replied Langlois. "I again say that the entire difficulty lies in a dish of macaroni. Now listen to me," he continued, "and I will explain. You have observed, no doubt, that no matter how delicately

prepared, my wife will never taste macaroni."

"Yes, I have remarked it," replied de Marans; "but what has that to do with the matter?"

"Much," said Langlois, laughing; "for thereby hangs a tale that dates as far back as the jealousy of which you complain."

"Of Monsieur de Villier, the father of Albertine?"

"Right again. Now listen; I will let you judge for yourself. De Villier was then young and handsome, my wife was but eighteen and as beautiful as an angel."

"All of which I admit," replied de Marans, "but I protest that she was innocent of even a thought disloyal to you. I would almost lay down my life that I am not mistaken."

"Then you would lose your life," replied his friend.

"I defy you to prove your words true," was the warm response, "for I will tell you now what you never knew before. I loved your wife in her girlhood; I saw that you were preferred, and never spoke my love; but I believe her to be all truth, all honor, and again defy you to prove your assertion."

"The proof is here," replied Langlois. Rising, he touched a panel in the wall, which yielded to the pressure of his hand, and opening, disclosed a secret passage. "You know," he continued, "that at Syracuse there was a certain Dionysius who took this plan to discover the secrets of his friend, and an English King emulated his example. I did likewise."

"Indeed!" replied de Marans, in surprise.

"Yes," continued the banker. "Formerly, in the early days of my married life, I made use of this passage, the existence of which I alone knew, and there I could overhear distinctly all that transpired within this room. I entered by a masked door, and frequently, when thought to be far away, I was there."

"I would not have believed you

capable of such conduct," exclaimed his listener.

"You are right, it was indelicate; nor do I seek to excuse myself—I simply admit the fact. But you must remember I was madly in love with my wife, who was, as you know, beautiful; and frantically jealous, I sought for any possible means to satisfy myself respecting her affection for me. It is now ten years since I last crossed the threshold of this passage, and to tell you the truth, I have lost the key. Well, *mon cher ami*, I had been married only one year when Monsieur de Villier became attentive to my wife. His visits to our house were constant. He came almost every day. In public he was always at her side. I watched in silence, suspecting his attentions to be of a tender nature. I grew terribly jealous, and I determined to learn the truth. Day after day I listened, almost wild, to his passionate words of love, to his jealousy of me, of even her infant son, who is now a man, the same who desires to marry his daughter. By every art de Villier sought to obtain the affections of my wife, and I, unseen, heard all—heard even his entreaty for her to leave me and follow him. While admitting her love for him, Madame Langlois resisted his every advance; she spoke to him respecting the holy ties that bound her life, and refused the commission of a sin before which she trembled. One day, carried away by the violence of his feelings, he reproached her and told her she did not love him. My Juliette replied in a voice tremulous with tears. She again vowed her love for him—told him of her unhappiness at the tie that separated them, admitting that I was the only obstacle to her happiness."

"Is this indeed true?" exclaimed de Marans.

"It is," continued Langlois, calmly. "Having drawn from my wife the promise to marry him if death freed her from the bondage of my presence, he took his departure, but not before I heard a kiss pressed on her lips and

the tremulous whisper of endearing words. I had overheard it all, and cursed myself for the device I had practiced—the device that forever changed the current of my life—for while the years that have elapsed have robbed the past of its sting, the first love of my life died in that struggle. For the sake of my son I determined to save the mother if possible, but how I knew not. I dared not reveal the fact that I had overheard, that I had acted the part of a spy, and an hour later I entered the room with a calm brow and seated myself beside my wife."

"And what did you tell her?"

"Not one word. The following morning the servant entered the dining-room and informed me that the cook wished to speak to me. In a tone of surprise I asked what he wanted. This the servant could not explain, and I bade the man enter. I had scarcely given the order when, pale and trembling, he stood in my presence.

"What is the matter, Martin?" inquired Madame Langlois, alarmed.

"*Oh, mon Dieu!*" replied the man; "if Madame only knew—only knew!"

"Speak, Martin," I commanded.

"He responded by placing a letter without signature in my hand. The epistle enclosed a one-thousand franc note and a small paper containing a white powder, with the request that the contents of the paper should find its way into the dish of macaroni that was to be prepared for me, adding that if the directions were satisfactorily carried out, Martin would receive double the sum. Pale and trembling, my wife sank upon the couch. Dismissing the man, whom I rewarded for his honesty, I turned to a little lapdog that was Juliette's special pet. Luring the animal to my side, I gave him, with some sugar, the powder contained in the paper. Scarcely had the poison—for poison it was—touched his tongue, when the animal fell dead at my feet.

"Great heavens! it was poison!" exclaimed my wife, and throwing her arms round me, she burst into tears."

"I do not wonder that Madame Langlois declines the match," exclaimed de Marans, "for, of course, the crime was meditated by de Villier, and her aversion for the entire family is fully explained. Surely you yourself must detest the man."

"Detest de Villier!" exclaimed Langlois; "then you think he tried to take my life?"

"Certainly; whom else should I suspect?"

"Why, myself, of course."

"You? What do you mean?"

"I mean that I wrote the letter to my cook myself, and sent the drug."

"*You?* you, Langlois?" was the astonished response.

"Of course I did. I was jealous, and with a cause. De Villier had told my wife that I was the only obstacle to their happiness. I knew that to reason with an infatuated woman was useless, and that the only way to cure the evil was to turn completely and unconsciously to herself the tide of feeling. The idea was suggested by the knowledge that my death was desired, and by this scheme I delivered myself of a dangerous rival, and taught my wife to tremble before the realization of her folly."

"But by so doing you have wronged Monsieur de Villier."

"That is very true; but he would have wronged me had things turned out otherwise, and besides, I do not say a single word against him."

"But you know, nevertheless, that your wife accuses de Villier."

"Yes, that is true; she accuses him because she knew that he longed for my death, and would marry her if she were free."

"But do you mean to say that you believe de Villier capable of committing such a crime? You know he is a man very much respected for his honorable character."

"That may be true; but he would not have hesitated to rob me of that which I hold dearer than life. By this deception I saved my wife, and do not regret the act. Twenty years have passed since then, and time has brought its punishment. My son is

unhappy. He loves Blanche de Villier. My wife will not give her consent, and I dare not complain."

At this instant the door opened and Madame Langlois entered.

"Returned so soon?" exclaimed the banker, rising. "I supposed you were yet at the ball."

"No," replied the lady. "I requested my son to accompany our friends, and I remained at home to reflect over Ernest's marriage."

"And you have concluded?"

"To no longer oppose his wishes."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Langlois, astonished.

"Yes," she continued; "and by the way, allow me to return you this key, which I found a few days ago."

With a blush of confusion the banker took the key in silence.

"My friend," exclaimed de Marans, "the trap of Dionysius of Syracuse and John of England has recoiled on you."

"Yes," interrupted Madame Langlois, "I have heard all."

"And you forgive me, dear?" murmured her husband, dropping on his knee and kissing her hand.

"With all my heart," was the warm response; "and I implore your forgiveness of the one folly of my youth."

One month later Ernest Langlois married Mademoiselle de Villier, and the fashionable world of fickle Paris, wondering at the sudden change in Madame Langlois, enthusiastically participated in the festivities of the gorgeous event.



JUSTIFYING HER TITLE

WHEN Lucy was twenty, fair-formed and fair-faced,
 They called her "the Wasp" on account of her waist,
 Which, they hinted, she laced.
 She's forty next Spring,
 And her waist—well, it's now quite a different thing,
 But she keeps the wasp's temper, its buzz, and its sting.

RUPERT HUGHES.



OWLISH OBSERVATIONS

WE can always see why others should set a good example.
 Any fool can find fault; most fools do.

It is easier to buy the good opinion of the world than to merit it.

Appreciation is not always shown in a manner in which it is appreciated.

Empty barrels make the most noise; after them come those who have emptied them.

Every man has in him the capacity for running some business—usually some other man's business.

Every man who shows that he thinks as highly of himself as we do of ourselves we set down as conceited.

L. DE V. MATTHEWMAN.



FRIENDS help; others pity.

EXPERT ASSISTANCE

By W. Pett Ridge

THE leading lady glanced at the card the page-boy had brought: "R. W. Blake, Esq." It seemed a little unusual; moreover, the card was slightly bent; an attempt had apparently been made to restore its youth with the aid of bread crumbs. The leading lady considered a moment and then nodded. Mr. Blake might be an interviewer, and with hundreds of young girls walking on the stage every day it was not a time to lose opportunity.

"Miss, my respects to you," said the new arrival.

"How do you do?"

"Don't get up," begged the man, taking off his silk hat and setting it down on an infant table with a bang. "You look very well where you are. My word! I wish I'd been able to keep all *my* youthful beauty."

"You have called—?" said the leading lady.

"In regard," he said, sitting down and crossing his legs comfortably, "in regard to a little matter of business that is no doubt occupying all your thoughts. That ain't my name on that card."

"You sent in a wrong one?"

"I sent in the only one I ever travel with," said the hoarse-voiced man, with a wise look. "I don't mind telling you because I know it won't go no further that my name's Mawson. There, now! You've got information that a lot of people 'aven't got."

"On what—" suggested the leading lady.

"We detectives—" began Mr. Mawson, importantly.

"Ah!"

"We detectives at the Yard 'ave to be up to pretty nearly every dodge on the board, and the quieter we keep ourselves the more likely we are to succeed. I was 'aving a bit of a snooze this evening at about 7.20 P.M. when our Chief Inspector sent for me and showed me this evening's paper. You've seen the evening paper, miss?"

"I get no time for literature."

"Still, this won't be news to *you*. Here y'are. 'Leading Actress Loses her Jewels—Mysterious Affair.'"

"Lindley," she said, in an undertone, addressing her absent manager, "Lindley, you are a marvel."

"Now you can see what brings me 'ere, miss."

"I am afraid that you Scotland Yard men are of very little use."

"We're only mortal," urged Mr. Mawson.

"That's a comfort," she said, with asperity. "All I know is that when I've lost my jewels before——"

"Not the same lot."

"Of course not the same lot. Pray don't interrupt."

"We can't do impossibilities, lady," he said.

"Then," said the leading lady, "it's high time you learned to. In all my experiences I've never had the least assistance from the police. They come here as you come now and make a lot of inquiries and ask a lot of silly questions and have something to drink——"

"Thanks for the offer," interrupted Mr. Mawson, "but not while I'm on duty. All the time there's business to be done, cold tea's my beverage. Afterward, of course, it's different.

Then I'm prepared to mop up almost anything that's within my reach."

"I suppose we must go through the usual formalities," said the leading lady, rising. "It's hard to lose—" here she referred again to the evening paper—"to lose five thousand pounds' worth of jewels, but it is still harder to think of my trusted servants being badgered and cross-examined."

"That ain't my way," remarked Mr. Mawson. "I belong to the new school. I trace everything up from the very origin, and put it all down in this note book 'ere, word for word. First thing is—you can set down if you like, miss."

"I prefer to walk up and down."

"We all 'ave our own ways of taking exercise. The question I'm forced to ask you is, when did you wear these jewels last?"

"I wore them," said the leading lady, "to the theatre last night."

"Did you wear 'em back, or—" The leading lady shook her head and gave an explanatory twirl of the hand in front of her neck. "I mean, did you wear 'em back 'ome again?"

"Of course I did."

"Let's keep our tempers as long as we can," he recommended, making a laborious note in his book. "You wore 'em back 'ome again. So far, good! What 'appened then, may I kindly ask?"

"I took them off, as usual, and placed them in the special drawer of my dressing table up-stairs."

"Right 'and drawer?"

"Left hand."

"Ah," said Mr. Mawson, acutely, "I thought so. And on going there to 'ave a look at them this morning you found 'em gone?"

"No, I did not," said the leading lady, fractiously. "They were there all right this morning."

"When did you miss 'em first?"

"There was a matinée to-day instead of an evening performance. When I went to find them at one o'clock they had disappeared."

"And you hadn't touched 'em?" he asked, "between early this morn-ing and one o'clock?"

"Of course I hadn't," she retorted, sharply. "How dare you insinuate that I did?"

"I'm an unmarried bachelor," pleaded Mr. Mawson, "and if my manners ain't sufficiently ladylike you must make some allowance for me. I've got a difficult task to perform, and if I can only bring it off, my reputation will be increased to a very considerable extent. If, therefore, I should appear what I may call unduly inquisitive—"

"You'll never find out who has taken them," said the leading lady; "I regard them as good as lost."

"I don't blame you, miss, for being philosophical," he remarked, handsomely. "I should myself if I could afford it."

"I expect you have some difficult cases to deal with."

"Enough," he admitted, "to take all the color out of your 'air. It's a constant—well, what shall I call it?"

"A duel?"

"That's it!" cried Mr. Mawson, slapping his knee applaudingly. "That's just it. A dool. There's crime on one side and there's the police on the other, and sometimes one side gets the best of it and sometimes the opposite side gets a look in, and very nasty the 'tecs' can be, mind you, when they get a chance. Very nasty indeed."

"I suppose that's natural."

"Natural," he admitted, thoughtfully, "but awk'ard. There ought to be more give and take in this world. Especially," he added, "especially take."

"I could wish that the world would not take my jewels. It's happened so often," the leading lady sighed, "that people must begin to wonder if it's always true."

"Surely," cried Mr. Mawson, indignantly, "surely they wouldn't go and doubt a lady's word!"

"They ought not to."

"If there are any such," he declared, with enthusiasm, "you can afford, lady, to ignore 'em. Take no notice of 'em! Scorn 'em! Treat 'em like nothing at all! Look past

'em! Make 'em think you don't know they're there! Show such contempt to that——"

"I suppose," she interrupted, "I'd better ring for the two servants."

"Not on my account. All I shall want to do is to make a sketch of—if you'll excuse the apparent vulgarity—of your room up-stairs."

"I'll just go first and see that everything is in order."

"Don't move anything," he begged. "I want to draw it just as it is."

"I quite understand," said the leading lady. "Excuse me, won't you?"

Mr. Mawson looked round as soon as the lady had tripped off, and seemed to admire one or two articles in the room. He opened his brown hand-bag and was about to place these inside, but restraining himself with an obvious effort, returned them to their original positions with a muttered warning to himself for his want of manners. He hummed a quick tune rather impatiently as the moments passed, and tried to concentrate his attention on the panel photographs of the leading lady which decorated the room. He gave an exclamation of relief when she returned.

"Thought I'd lost you," he said, gallantly.

"You can go up now," said the leading lady. "Come down afterward and show me the sketch you've made."

"Don't you go laughing at it."

"Will it get into the papers, I wonder?" she asked, with a charming air of inquisitiveness.

"Not unless you wish it, miss."

"Oh, I don't mind," she replied, lightly. "It's all advertisement."

Mr. Mawson bowed, and taking up his brown hand-bag, went out.

The leading lady smiled at herself in the palette-shaped mirror that stood on one of the tables; not the smile that she used on the stage, but one that expressed genuine amusement. Taking up the evening paper Mr. Mawson had brought, she snipped out the paragraph to which he had drawn her attention, and placed it in

a large volume bearing for title the words "PRESS NOTICES." It occurred to her presently that Mr. Mawson was a long time over his task, but as an amateur in art the work of sketching the room was perhaps one not swiftly accomplished. She read a leading article in the evening paper, and soothed by this, closed her eyes.

"If you please, miss."

"Now what is it?" asked the leading lady, yawning.

"Two men have called and want to see you on urgent business."

"Has that other person gone, Barker?"

"Oh, yes, miss. He left half an hour ago. Asked me to say that he'd got all he wanted."

"These are journalists, I suppose. Show them in, Barker."

The two men marched into the room and stood precisely shoulder to shoulder at the doorway.

"We have called—" began one.

"—about your loss of jewels," said the other.

"Presuming that they *are* lost——"

"—our instructions are to give you every assistance."

The duet stopped.

"You are late," said the leading lady.

"We've only just—" said one.

"—received our orders," added the other.

"Here's our cards——"

"—with our names on them," said the second.

"You are detectives, too, then?"

"We are two detectives," corrected the first.

"I say," persisted the leading lady, "you are detectives, *too*, because there has been one of your men from Scotland Yard here already. Name of Mawson."

"The name is new to me."

"I've never so much as dreamt of it," said the second detective.

"But here's his card."

The two men looked at it attentively.

"Oh," said the first detective, "Joe Mawson."

"I think the first name is Joseph," agreed the leading lady.

"That's why they called him Joe. Why he—he's been dead this ten years."

"And buried," added the second detective.

"Perhaps this was his son," she suggested.

"Old Joe Mawson never had a son," said the first detective. "Trust him."

"Well," remarked the leading lady, "it doesn't matter much. He only took a sketch of the room up-stairs where the jewels were supposed to be taken from."

"*Supposed* to be?" said the first detective.

"Well," she said, hesitatingly, "you know how these things get into the papers."

"In confidence, miss," said the first detective, "is this only a fake? We sha'n't let it go any further, but as a matter of fact, is it only—?"

"That's all," smiled the leading lady. "I didn't tell the first man so,

but my agent has arranged it. He said nothing to me about it, as he ought to have done; so don't go blaming me for all the trouble you've had. You'd like a drink, I expect." She pressed a knob.

"Touching this first caller, though. Were the jewels up-stairs all the time?"

"Ah," she said, artfully, "but I was careful enough to hide them."

"Are they still there?"

"I can easily run up and make sure of that."

When the two detectives heard a scream up-stairs they nodded at each other solemnly. The maid entered at that moment with a tray and started off at the sound. She returned as the two were struggling with an obstinate siphon.

"They've gone—they've really gone this time!" wailed the servant, "and mistress says she'll never trust a detective again."

"Well," said the two men from Scotland Yard, indignantly, "that's a pretty way to put it!"



MYSTERY

ONE whom I love not, yesterday
Spake bitter words and harsh to me;
I laughed and went upon my way
Unwounded utterly.

But oh! the one by love endeared
This day spake those same words to me,
And all my heart with pain is seared
As some lashed slave's might be.

Marvel—all mysteries above—
Mine enemy no thrust may boast;
But from the lips of mine own love
Came that which wounded most.

G. T.



SUPERFLUOUS

MAUDE—Do you know why Cupid doesn't wear any clothes?
CLAUDE—I suppose it's because he's such a warm baby.

GEORGE BRENTON, ARTIST

By Alice Dunbar

(Mrs. Paul Laurence Dunbar)

BRENTON settled himself on the divan with a comfort-be-speaking sigh.

"It's so good, Miss Drake," he said, "to get here and have a rest, at last."

Miss Drake gave him a silent smile as she handed him a cup of tea. He sipped it for a few minutes with half-closed eyes, and with another sigh laid his hand for an instant on her slim, cool fingers.

"After being mauled over and coddled and lionized, it's a positive relief to come to you and be let alone."

"If only the world would realize that a man needs that more than many things!" she replied.

"Many things," he mused, "yes," with a short little laugh—"kisses, for instance."

George Brenton was an artist; that is, an artist in the strict, old-fashioned sense, in which all artists do something, paint pictures or give the world marble idealizations. To-day any dilettante with the ability to choose and harmonize colors is an artist. There is no distinction of meaning between the artist and the artistic.

Brenton painted pictures and sold them. One or two had been hung in a salon. He had no income save what his brush brought him, and as no one, not even his serving man, accused him of parsimony, the financial returns from his work must have been considerable. Life had come to be an easy matter for him. It had been an uphill toil at first. He had not forgotten the hungry years and the bitter humiliation of his early

struggles. But he had won success, and he smiled suavely at the world that had been so grudging at first, and now seemed anxious to make amends.

Thus it happened that Brenton was lionized; and on a weary afternoon, at a weary weak-tea and sponge-cake affair, he met Margaret Drake.

She was leaning against a window with a tired look on her face when their hostess presented him. In the momentary pause that followed the polite nothings, he scanned her closely. He saw a pale, small, unfashionable woman a few years his senior. There was nothing striking about her, only a pair of kind, keen blue eyes and a wealth of pale-gold hair.

"You are tired, too," she said.

It was startling, unexpected. He gave her a grateful look.

"I am," he sighed. "What are you doing here?" he continued.

"Mrs. Hendron would never have forgiven me had I not come. I am going now. Come to see me. I have a little den all to myself in Trinity Place, No. 27. An old-fashioned neighborhood, you know, but it may rest you sometimes. No one ever bothers the little old maid."

It was far different from the invitations he usually received, and its unconventionality had a charm. Brenton decided to avail himself of it as soon as possible.

One rainy, gusty evening he found his way to her rooms. His artist soul found in them a certain sense of gratification. They were comparatively bare, yet graceful and cheery,

and permeated with an atmosphere of purity and restfulness. There were stained floors and rugs, brass candlesticks, a couch, and a few tasteful pictures. Brenton noticed, with a gasp, that two of his best small ones were among the lot. An open fire gave the final home-like touch. There were books on all the walls. In the minute that elapsed before her appearance he scanned some of the titles.

"Just the things I should have expected her to have," was his comment.

She met him with a hearty grasp of the hand, and would have him stay for tea. "Although I know you must have more than your share of the beverage," she said, with a quick little laugh and a flash of her keen eyes.

It was perhaps the restfulness of Miss Drake's rooms and the quick, intuitive sympathy she gave him that held Brenton in thrall that evening. Insensibly he found himself drifting into an admiration that, while it seemed momentary, he felt would recur to him after he had gone from her presence.

Miss Drake was a woman without kindred, without ties, and with just enough of an income to enable her to live the independent life of the modern woman—part student, part dilettante, part philanthropist. Perhaps the reason her friends loved her was because she never talked of herself. Instead, she was the repository of all sorts of confidences, from transcendental revealings and quixotic business schemes to love affairs of very young men. She had a sympathetic ear for everyone, and a seemingly limitless fund of enthusiastic encouragement. In fact, Miss Drake was a woman of enthusiasms. She was not enough past thirty to have grown cynical and bitter, and as it was generally conceded that her bachelor existence was a matter of choice, there was no need for her to assume the attitude of man-hater. Her persistent and enthusiastic encouragement had been the making of more than one poor

young fellow, down in the depths of disappointment and despair.

As the evening wore away, Brenton found himself wishing he had known her in his dark days. What a help she would have been, he thought.

It was several weeks, however, before he could bring himself to visit her again. He had not quite got over the shyness of youth, and Miss Drake was too abstract a bit of ideal womanhood for him to feel familiar with her yet. When he did call again she met him, as before, with her warm clasp and a half-shade of reproach in her voice as she asked why he had been so long coming. He wondered why he felt at ease at once, and he wondered still further why his stupid shyness should have kept him away so long.

From desultory calls, Brenton fell to making regular visits. Six months passed, and he found that they had instinctively drifted into a sympathetic comradeship, inexpressibly comforting and pleasant.

"Margaret is a sensible woman," he mused one night over the studio fire; "she is the only woman I've met whom I don't feel that I must propose to if I make frequent calls, or flirt with if I meet out." He paused and smiled at the idea of Margaret in a flirtation or a love affair. It was ludicrous; more than that, it was painful. "A pure little white-souled woman," he continued, "it is desecration to consider her in such a relation."

He came to her with his sketches for the picture that was to be the great work of his life, and she, with a delicate touch or suggestion, helped the idea grow. They had books in common, and music to listen to in the silence of satisfaction. Brenton found himself expanding, and blessed Margaret, and revered her as something above and beyond him.

They were seated before the open fire one night. The dainty bareness of the room grew soft and full of suggestive richness under the wavering light of the pine log. Margaret allowed Brenton the indulgence of a

cigar now and then; it made it more homelike for him, she said. They had been silent for several minutes, when he blew a wreath of smoke and said, meditatively:

"Yes, I shall marry some day. I have my ideal woman now, but I'm not silly enough to expect to find her. When the nearest one to that ideal comes, I shall ask her to be my wife."

Margaret started, and was silent for an instant; then she asked:

"What is your ideal like?"

"She is tall and slim and dark-haired," he replied, musingly; "she is gay and cheery and not too wise. She will be a companion to me in every sense of the word; just such a comrade as you are, Margaret, dear, only much more so, of course, for she will be my wife."

Margaret winced; then, with a sudden burst of her usual enthusiasm, exclaimed:

"And you will have a cozy little home, just big enough for two such birds as you are, and I shall come and see you, and sometimes we'll have jolly little evenings here about my big fire."

"Yes, yes; what a trio we shall make!"

"Perhaps Ideala won't have room in her heart for the little old maid," she ventured.

"My Ideala," he laughed, "will be such a big-hearted woman that she will have room for all my dear friends."

There was no more said for a while, and the fire burned low and flickered mournful shadows about them. Margaret shivered again, and Brenton rose to go, with an odd, constrained feeling he could not have explained and a guilty sense of something wrong, something awkward.

The feeling was momentary, however, and forgotten until the morning of his birthday, when a costly present came from Margaret. He gazed at it dubiously, as he remembered a trifling keepsake he had sent her, feeling that theirs was a friendship that did not need extravagant expressions.

"I wish she hadn't," was his com-

ment as he opened the envelope and read the note that accompanied the gift. It was merely a little couplet from Herrick.

"She's paid a month's income for this thing," he growled, walking round the table for a further view. The present was a bronze that he had long wanted for his studio. The buying of it had gone rather by default than from lack of means. He plunged his hands into his pockets, walked to the window and gazed out into the chill street. Then he turned back and looked about the studio. The bronze seemed to pervade it disagreeably, he thought.

"Confound it, I wish she hadn't!" he said again, and went out, slamming the door violently.

"Margaret," Brenton said that afternoon, walking abruptly into her library, "I've come to give you a good scolding."

"What now, Sir Knight?" she laughed; "an' troth, how have I sinned this time?"

"That bronze, this morning—" he began.

But she would have no more of it. She put her hand over his mouth and drew his chair to the fire and began a story, which, like Scheherezade's, made him forget all about annoyances. The bronze came to fill a niche in his studio, and the evenings went on as before.

They had been having a long talk one evening, for a great offer had been made to Brenton. He had been asked to assist in the decoration of a public library in a big Western city. It was a proud time for him, for only great artists had been selected.

"I shall be a pigmy among giants," he told Margaret, humbly.

"You are the greatest among them," she made reply, "and I am proud to know you and to send you forth."

When he left that night she held his hand at the door for a minute, caressing it silently. Then, with a sudden, swift movement, she drew him to her, kissed him on the lips, pushed him out the door and closed it

before he could speak or could realize what had happened.

Brenton walked home with an odd sense of shame and confusion. He was embarrassed, surprised and a little hurt. Of course, it was only a sisterly kiss of congratulation, he told himself over and over; but it did not fit Margaret; it seemed inconsistent, somehow. And, as before, he found himself saying, rather vaguely, "I wish she hadn't."

He found a letter next morning on his table, and a book of poems he had once wished for.

"I do not know what you think of me," the letter ran, "for my action to-night. I could not sleep until I had written you. I am so proud of you, my dear boy, so glad to know that your success still follows you, that I may, perhaps, rather overdo in my affection for you. I only wanted to congratulate you to-night, and I did not know how. Mine has been a self-repressed life, with little love and less sympathy, and I am awkward, I suppose. However, you know and you understand, and that is enough."

Brenton put the letter down and looked from the book to the statuette. He groaned, bit his lip and dropped his head on his hand.

"I hope I don't understand," he sighed.

A week passed, and he found himself reluctant to go to 27 Trinity Place. Thursday evening came, and as he was not dining out, he settled himself for a quiet smoke.

"I would go to Margaret's," he told the fire, "but I can't, somehow. Well, I suppose I don't want her to change."

The bell rang, and the man brought in a box. Brenton opened it, with a sinking sensation at the heart. There were roses, red Jacqueminots, which he loved so well, and one little Marguerite nestled among them. That was all.

An hour later he walked into her library.

She hovered over him with caressing tenderness, her hand resting now on his head, now on his shoulders.

He was conscious of a creepiness that amounted almost to repulsion. Suddenly he shook himself free with an impatient gesture, and his head touched something soft and silken on the chair.

"What on earth?" he cried, sitting bolt upright and grabbing at the offending drapery.

"I am conscious of late," said Margaret, "that these rooms of mine are bare, painfully so. I find myself shivering in them. They are unfeminine, unhomelike, and I am trying to soften the angles."

"Margaret!" cried Brenton. There was disgust in his tone; he was about to say more, but thought better of it, and closing his lips in a grim line, he quietly tore the silken drapery into ribbons and fed it bit by bit to the fire. Then he went home, feeling injured and depressed.

Thinking it all over next morning, Brenton decided that something was wrong. He did not love Margaret; there was no mistake about that. He had grown into the habit of considering her as something far above and beyond such thoughts. He would as soon have acted frivolously with his mother. Yet at the thought of Margaret's caresses he shivered and was filled with great dread of seeing her again.

Three times during the days that followed he resolved to stay away from her until the time came for him to go to the work on the Western library, and as often his resolution was shaken. Once it was a quaint old medallion that, her note said, she had found in an art store, and knew he would want; then it was a fragment of Pompeian pottery, and again a small engraving.

He disposed the things about his studio. They were tasteful, costly and in harmony with the other furnishings, yet he could not help noticing, with a growing sense of irritation, that the room was beginning to express her rather than himself. He felt that he was being taken possession of and that his struggles would be in vain.

"Margaret," he cried one night, "there is perfume in this room. Where is it, I beseech you to tell me?"

For answer, she laid her head against his arm. A faint breath of heliotrope lingered over the golden hair, and then he noticed, for the first time, that her dress, though black, as always, was fluffy and frivolous looking, and fell away in soft ruffles from her white throat, while her hair clustered in ringlets about her face.

"Can it be that Margaret's in love?" he asked himself on the way home. "Surely she wouldn't be so silly. She's too great and strong a woman. . . ." He turned the question over in his mind a hundred times, but he could decide nothing. Only strangely, subtly, as the days wore on, the idea seemed less and less incongruous.

He began to grow accustomed to the perfume in her hair, to the frivolous dresses, the silken scarfs about the room, even to one or two irresponsible-looking paper shades on the once barren candlesticks. The daily note from her and the frequent little gifts he had become hardened to. A certain indefinable fineness had gone out of their intercourse, but if Margaret noticed it, she gave no sign. Brenton felt that their visits together were but gentle fencing matches. Sometimes he wondered how she could be so blunt in her perceptions.

She had come to demand his presence at least once a day. He struggled at first, then yielded. He could not do otherwise. When he was alone he cursed himself for his weakness, but the evening found him with her. "It is the only gentlemanly thing to do," he told himself; "and at any rate, I shall be going soon, and when I come home she will have forgotten."

But something within him told him that she would not forget. The possibilities of love, of marriage, of devotion without marriage, even, were easy to think of now in connection with Margaret. Still, he shuddered and felt uncanny, and thought of

creepy things when she touched him with caressing hands.

It was the last night but one before he was to leave the city. They had sat in desultory conversation for a little while, when he rose suddenly, with a determined look on his face.

"You are not going?" she cried.

"I must, Margaret," he answered.

"There are many to whom I must say good-bye."

"Many?" she echoed, "am I to see nothing of you? Have I no claim on you? Who are the many? Do they care for you, yourself, or do they only fawn on you because you are a great artist? You are inconsiderate; you don't care!"

She was white with anger and her eyes blazed. For a minute Brenton was dazed. The thought of Margaret—gentle, unselfish Margaret—in a pet, was so new that he required time to get accustomed to it. He gazed at her blankly, then said, dully:

"You are very selfish, Margaret."

She burst into tears, and putting her arms about his neck, begged forgiveness, sobbing that she hated to give him up, even for a moment. He kissed her forehead mechanically, and went out, still dazed.

"If ever a man was in a devil of a box," he muttered, between his teeth, on the way to his club, "I am that man. Heaven is my witness, I've never by word, look or action led that woman to believe that I love her. Yet—yet—what would any other man think of any other woman who did what Margaret does?"

"Give me all of your last evening here," begged a little note the next morning. "You will be gone so long, and there is so much I want to say to you."

Brenton had grown used to shocks by now, hence a rose-pink dress in place of Margaret's usual somber garments elicited only a tightening of his lips. He felt a momentary anger that the last wrench had been made in his regard for her.

She settled herself in a low chair and crossed her hands over her knees meditatively.

"George," she said, softly, "there is something I want to tell you, something I must say. I've been wanting to tell you for some time, but it was hard to begin."

The sweat broke out on Brenton's face. He grasped the arm of his chair to steady his reeling brain. What was coming?

"I never told you," she went on, "why I never married. It's a pitiful little story, and somehow I feel that I owe the telling of it to you. It was——"

But Brenton put out his hand and clutched her arm.

"Stop, Margaret!" he cried, wildly, "don't—don't tell me. I have no right to know anything of your past life, and you have no right to tell me. I don't want to know. Don't!"

She turned and looked at him wonderingly, and a certain hardness came into her face. Brenton rose desperately.

"Margaret," he continued, "I am a brute, a hulking criminal, I know, but I must say it. Don't you see I understand? Can't you understand, too?"

She shook her head, and he saw tears come into her eyes.

"Margaret, don't look like that, I can't help it. Have you misunderstood me? It's your fault, of course; I must blame someone;" he laughed nervously, and took her hands in his. They were limp and inert. "It can't be, dear; it's no use. I am going now; good-bye," and he turned and went out. He saw her before the door closed, standing still and white,

the rose-pink dress casting a glow over her drawn face that made it all the more ghastly.

"Good God!" he said, when the stars shone over his bared head, "how shall I ever forgive myself?"

The next day was dreary and sodden, and Brenton felt a certain gloomy sense of elation that the skies should be in harmony with his mental state. He had bought his ticket, and was pushing through the crowd to his train, when he felt a touch on his arm, and turned. Margaret stood by his side, cheerily smiling into his face.

"I have come to say good-bye to you," she said, holding out her hand, "and to wish you good luck in your work." She was dressed in her old-time, plain, unfashionable dress; her hair under the little old hat was drawn back severely, as in the old days when he had first known her.

"Margaret! You?" he gasped.

"Why not?" she smiled back at him.

"You surely did not think that I would be so ungrateful of the good hours we have spent together as to let you go without a godspeed, did you? Write to me sometimes when you feel like it, and if you don't feel like it—well, just don't. We shall always be the best of friends, no matter where you are; shall we not, brother mine?"

"Always, Margaret, always," he said, wringing her hand. "God bless you, little woman!"

Then the train swallowed him, and as it sped out of the city Brenton leaned back and sighed as if a great load had been lifted from his shoulders.



UNDENIABLE PROOF

WAGGLES—I never believed Jinks was henpecked until yesterday.

JAGGLES—What convinced you?

WAGGLES—He wore the cravat his wife gave him for Christmas.



IF a fellow didn't have a good time at Christmas he wouldn't feel like making good resolutions at New Year's.

LE JEU ET L'AMOUR

Par J. H. Rosny

“**M**ESSIEURS, faites vos jeux!”

Il faisait chaud. Une lueur crue s'échappait des poires électriques et les joueurs, avec des yeux mornes ou frénétiques, disposaient l'or, les jetons et les billets sur les tableaux fatidiques. L'espoir dilatait quelque visage blafard, la crainte contractait quelque lèvres ardente, un sombre sourire tressaillait au coin d'une paupière.

Jacques Lemoyne considérait un jeune homme qui perdait. Le malheureux était livide. Ses beaux yeux jeunes et frais respiraient l'épouvante; à chaque reprise, des gouttes de sueur se formaient sur sa tempe, sa main tremblait convulsivement.

“N'est-ce pas sa dernière nuit?” fit mélancoliquement Lemoyne. “Il me rappelle cette heure de ma jeunesse où le suicide me guettait le long des boulevards. Le jeu m'avait tout pris — l'amour —”

“—allait t'achever!” ricana Ser-vaïse.

Lemoyne haussa les épaules:

“L'amour me sauva! L'amour sut vaincre à la fois et le jeu et la mort—mais non comme on l'entend d'ordinaire! Ah! ce n'est pas devant moi qu'il faut comparer les ravages de la femme à ceux de la table verte! La femme pour moi est divine; je ne lui dois que beauté, joie, courage, honneur!”

“J'étais alors un grand garçon qui ne désirait rien tant que bien faire, mais doué d'une volonté faible. Vif comme un lévrier, étourdi comme un singe, je passais ma vie à contrevenir à mes résolutions. Néanmoins, j'avais réussi à décrocher l'agrégation

et même j'étais de moitié dans une découverte qui, depuis, a fait son chemin dans le monde. De cette découverte, je n'avais eu que l'idée première. Seul, j'aurais été complètement incapable de mener la chose à bonne fin. Heureusement, mon ami Lacaze, grand analyste et expérimentateur subtil, avait su tirer l'or de sa gangue. Bref, nous possédions le moyen de faire fortune, mais il nous fallait un capital de départ et nous étions pauvres comme Job. Mon oncle Charles offrit les dix mille francs indispensables. C'étaient toutes les économies de ce brave homme qui subsistait d'une rente viagère. Il les risquait sur une idée à laquelle il ne comprenait pas grand'chose—mais l'oncle Charles était l'idéal des oncles. C'est lui qui m'avait élevé depuis la mort de mes parents, et je ne crois pas que mon propre père eût pu montrer plus de tendresse et d'abnégation. Malheureusement, il n'était pas observateur; toutes mes frasques n'avaient pu l'engager à se défier de mon caractère. Au lieu de s'occuper de l'emploi des dix mille francs, il commit l'imprudence de me les remettre. . . . Or, à tous mes défauts, je joignais la passion du jeu, et, le soir même où j'avais reçu les billets, j'eus la fatale imprudence d'entrer dans un tripot où j'avais déjà perdu pas mal de louis. Je ne vous conterai pas ma mésaventure par le menu. Ce genre de récit a été si admirablement fait par les hommes de lettres que vous n'avez qu'à vous remémorer un des dix ou quinze chefs-d'œuvre de l'espèce pour imaginer comment, de louis en louis, puis de billet en billet, je me trouvai au matin nettoyé comme un os de côtelette livré

à un caniche. Mon désespoir fut horrible. Pendant trois heures je me promenai le long des quais avec l'idée d'en finir. Puis, j'eus envie de revoir encore une fois le digne homme qui m'avait si tendrement élevé et je remis mon suicide jusqu'à l'après-midi.

"Il n'était que sept heures quand je rentrai au domicile. Mon oncle dormait encore; le sommeil était son péché. Je ne trouvai que la vieille Anaïs qui cumulait diverses fonctions domestiques et ma petite cousine Henriette. Cousine si l'on veut, d'ailleurs. Dans le fait, Henriette appartenait à la famille de ma tante et n'avait, par conséquent, aucun lien de race avec moi. C'était une étincelante fille de dix-sept ans. Un teint de muguet, deux lèvres qui promettaient ensemble la tendresse et la volupté, des yeux fins, nuancés, qui, derrière la grille de soie des cils, jetaient une mystérieuse lumière turquinoise, une taille de marquise et les mains d'une princesse de Van Dyck. Orpheline comme moi, l'oncle Charles l'avait recueillie depuis une année. Elle m'émouvait, mais, si faible de volonté que je fusse, je comprenais que mes désirs devaient s'arrêter là comme la mer devant la falaise. Henriette, au reste, aurait su se faire respecter. Une énergie admirable se cachait sous ses grâces; et, capable du plus fervent amour, elle était à l'abri de toute indigne faiblesse.

"Elle me vit pâle, défait, les yeux creux et se mit à me considérer avec attention. Je voulus me réfugier dans ma chambre, mais elle me retint:

"« Dites-moi ce qui vous est arrivé, » fit-elle d'une voix douce.

"Il y a de ces moments où la confiance jaillit des âmes comme la lave du volcan. Je dis tout, hâtivement, fiévreusement, puis j'éclatai en sanglots. Elle me regardait avec une pitié profonde.

"Après un long silence, elle dit:

"« Vous avez affreusement mal agi — non à cause de vous, mais à cause de notre oncle et de votre ami. Il y aurait un moyen de réparer le mal. Regardez-moi: est-ce que je vous déplais?"

"Je la regardai, stupéfait. À travers ma douleur, quelque chose de doux et de puissant palpitait comme une étoile dans l'orage. Je dis tout bas:

"« Vous me plaisez infiniment!"

"« Alors, vous m'épouseriez?"

"C'était si inattendu, si bizarre, que je restais bouche bée.

"« Eh, oui!" fit-elle, avec un peu d'impatience; 'je ne suis pas très riche, mais enfin, j'ai une dot. En m'épousant, vous seriez sauvé, et doublement sauvé, car je crois que je pourrais avoir de l'influence sur votre caractère.'

"Le cœur me battit. Elle me parut divine—et, dans l'émotion de cette minute, le goût que j'avais pour elle sembla grandir soudain, comme on dit de ces plantes de l'Inde qui sortent en une heure de la terre.

"« Mais vous ne m'aimeriez pas!" m'écriai-je. 'Je suis digne de votre mépris.'

"Elle fixa sur moi ses beaux yeux sincères:

"« Que non! je suis bien sûre, au contraire, que je vous aimerais; je suis sûre que je serais heureuse de lutter avec vous pour vaincre la faiblesse de votre volonté.'

"Elle sourit, avec la malice charmante de la femme, et reprit:

"« Eh bien! différez votre réponse. Promettez-moi seulement de vivre quelques jours, et, ce soir, retournez au jeu . . . *pour la dernière fois.* Vous jouerez pour moi. Ce sera comme si vous débutiez. Voici mon enjeu.'

"Elle me tendit sa petite bourse qui contenait quelques louis.

"Le soir, je jouai les louis d'Henriette. Une chance presque constante me favorisa. À deux heures du matin, je rentrais à la maison avec dix mille francs. Henriette m'attendait. Elle prit l'argent et me dit:

"« Me voilà votre associée. Je commande votre affaire.'

"Je voulus répliquer, mais elle me regarda avec cette douceur impérieuse à laquelle depuis cette nuit je n'ai jamais pu résister, et qui tout ensemble m'engourdit et me remplit d'adoration.

" ' Il sera fait comme vous le voudrez ! ' murmurai-je.

" Elle me tendit sa petite main ; j'y posai ardemment ma lèvre : l'amour était venu qui devait remplir toute ma vie.

" Je ne vous apprendrai pas que j'ai fait fortune," ajouta rêveusement Lemoyne. " Mais qu'est la fortune au prix du bonheur que j'ai dû à la petite or-

pheline qui voulut être ma femme ? Par elle ma vie fut étrangement belle et émouvante. Elle me donna la volonté que je n'avais pas ; un amour magnifique et délicieux, des joies prodigieuses : après quinze ans de mariage je l'aime autant que le premier jour. Elle est pour moi toutes les femmes—jamais je n'en ai désiré aucune autre—et je ne pourrais pas lui survivre ! "



JUST LIKE MOLASSES CANDY

HE was a bashful, timid man,
And had a dreadful scare
Whene'er to Sylvia he began
His passion to declare.

But she knew what she was about,
And helped the youth to win ;
With easy grace she drew him out,
And then she pulled him in !

NATHAN M. LEVY.



EASILY INTERPRETED

MRS. HOON—I dreamed last night that you had given me an automobile.
MR. HOON—H'm, yes ! You had a horseless nightmare—and by the way, my dear, dreams usually go by contraries.



BLEAT OF THE SHEARED LAMB

" STEEREM is a Wall street operator, isn't he ? " Poindexter asked.
" Yes, he operated on me," Goldthorpe replied.



AN OPPROBRIOUS PERSON

JOHNSING—What yo' mad at Marfa fo' ?
MRS. JOHNSING—She done call me appropriate names.

UNCLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

ROOM WANTED—Citizen of Rhode Island wants more room. Address, CROWDED.

BOY WANTED—In fireworks factory. Excellent chance to rise. POWDERLY.

FOR SALE—Expurgated copies of Zola's works. Cheaper than dirt! Address, BOOKWORM.

WANTED—Parachute jumper wants a comfortable place to stop this Fall. Address, ANXIOUS.

THEATRICAL—Character comedian wanted to impersonate Kentucky colonel in tank drama. Address, MANAGER.

SITUATION WANTED—By cheerful and obliging cook, in large family. Do washing and ironing. No objection to country. Address, NORA, care Insane Asylum.

HELP WANTED—Foolish party, recently dragged into good society by his women folks, wants able-bodied Samaritan to please help him out. Address, LOBSTER.

WANTED—Young man who finds himself unable to accept a lucrative position will be glad to cut his hair and take a job. Address, COLLEGE GRADUATE.

PERSONAL—Confirmed pessimist would like to witness a French duel; object, amusement. Address, GRIMM.

WANTED—Silent partner. Address, MARRIED MAN.

BUSINESS PERSONAL—Customers will please take notice that Swindlebaum & Burnupski's great semi-annual fire will positively take place next Wednesday night.

PERSONAL—Entirely unique! Publicity without divorce! Startling novelty for actresses! Address, I. C. U.

WANTED—Men to take hold of an electric battery. Address, EEL.

WANTED—By counterfeiter, a partner who can make good. Address, QUEER.

THEATRICAL—Wanted, sensational drama starring two real safe-blowers, to open house. Address, RURAL MANAGER.

FOR SALE, CHEAP—Abandoned oil well in Texas. Reason for selling, stockholders in the hole. Address, HOOKS & KLAW.

FOR SALE—Daughter of the Revolution, who has recently fallen heir to a merry-go-round, wishes to sell it. Address, VERTIGO.



HIS DELICATE PROPOSAL

GLADYS (*on Christmas morning*)—What a dear little clock! Who gave you that?

MARJORIE—George, of course.

GLADYS—Is it going?

MARJORIE—Oh, no. George wishes me to understand that I may set my own time.

THE CURING OF MRS. MUNROE

By Havelock Ettrick

THE past of Mr. Vert Glandyss was wrapped in profound obscurity. He had come from no one knew where, and his wealth was gleaned from sources as mysterious as his identity. He claimed to know everybody, yet very few people would own to having his name on their list of intimate acquaintances. He was possessed of good looks and irreproachable manners, was a brilliant linguist, and, all in all, was charming. Perhaps there was even a superabundance of charm about him.

Certainly Mrs. Weevil Gunner, who was ecclesiastically disposed, did not believe in him. "My dear," she had said to her greatest friend, "don't tell me! That man's smile and diabolical fascinations can emanate from but one person—his Unmentionable Majesty! I firmly believe that if you sprinkled him with holy water it would sizzle!"

But then, as Society remarked, Mrs. Weevil Gunner was only—Mrs. Weevil Gunner, and Mr. Vert Glandyss was—the fashion! *Voilà tout!*

Tampering with what was sometimes called "the powers of evil" was a favorite pastime that season, and the suite of rooms on the first floor of No. 988 New Bond street—where tea of quite exceptional excellence was provided gratis—was daily crowded with a fashionable mob, emotional idlers of high rank, all eager to test the power of the King of Hypnotists, Mr. Vert Glandyss.

"He is such a dear man," remarked a portly dowager, with enthusiasm, "that to be put into a trance by him and made to do funny things is really quite appetizing! I never enjoy my

dinner so much as when I have been watching my friends making fools of themselves!"

Among the habitués of the gorgeously furnished rooms was Mrs. Hallam Munroe, a pretty Canadian widow. She was reputed to have a huge fortune, an indelible memory for a devoted husband, and the smallest feet in London. The first named she apparently did possess; her coupé, so often to be seen in Bond street, was quite perfect in its way, and her flat in Victoria street was pronounced by those who had penetrated to its coveted precincts to be in equally good taste. There was no doubt that Mrs. Hallam Munroe had money, and what was equally self-evident, she knew how to keep it.

For three years in succession Mrs. Munroe had come from her native Toronto to London for the season. She entertained lavishly, basked in the smiles of Royalty, and generally disported herself like a butterfly among the flowers of that exclusive garden, the Upper Ten! The season over, she as regularly disappeared; the arrival of the date after which the mysterious decree of society determines that it is no longer *chic* to be seen on the pavements of Piccadilly saw brown paper pasted over the windows of her flat, and the Bond street jewelers knew her no more.

Of acquaintances she had many, friends few, but of hunters after her hand and wealth there was no lack. These were kept at bay both by the easy diplomacy of the little lady herself and by Colonel Whitelaw, a gentleman of middle age and unexceptionable personal appear-

ance who had constituted himself, on the score of being a fellow-Canadian and of having known her late husband as a boy and herself when a baby, the faithful watchdog of her person and apartment.

The searcher after gold found the Colonel invariably deep in conversation with his hostess, and her smiles were as sweet as the sugar with which she solicitously doctored his tea. The anxious stranger was nowhere. When the utmost limit of time allowed by the unwritten laws of society for an afternoon call had slipped by, the disconcerted and penniless youths with historic names, and the smartly dressed ladies who were blessed with a superfluity of sons, were forced to take their leave, and they inevitably left the Colonel behind them, he, with his grimly smiling face, being apparently a fixture.

But life was not entirely a bed of roses for Mrs. Hallam Munroe. She had one great trial. Nature had seen fit to afflict her with a slight stammer. Society had agreed—since the pretty widow had taken to giving excellent dinners—that her affliction lent a certain quaintness and piquancy to her beauty, but the lady herself writhed daily, with bitter complainings, under its humiliation. The stammer invariably roused itself to activity when she was most anxious to give vent to some smart impromptu witticism or to acknowledge with becoming *aplomb* the honeyed adulation of smiling Royalty. At such moments her nerves would sometimes play her tricks, the carefully selected words refused to flow, unbecoming grimaces took their place, the witticism or daintily conceived reply was robbed of its cunning and flavor by being a second or so too late, and Mrs. Hallam Munroe was left chattering her pretty teeth with rage and mortification.

Up to the present time she had found no cure for the affliction, though many quacks with their bombastic assurances had been consulted—and found wanting.

Forming one of a fashionable

throng, she had attended one or two of Mr. Vert Glandyss's séances given in his Bond street rooms. She had been astonished and delighted to learn that among the many uses to which he professed to put hypnotism was the cure of stammering. With trembling hands she had drawn forth her visiting card, a private audience was solicited—and granted. The sufferer, with many hesitations provoked by her nervousness, had stated her grievance against nature, and inquired the price of salvation. The great man was all sympathy.

"Allow me, dear lady," he said, softly, "to examine the roof of your mouth. You don't mind?—no? You are very good. Ah!" he exclaimed, after peering with judicial eyes into the rosy twilight of the pretty widow's mouth, and assuming an air of intellectual profundity, "ah! as I thought—nothing structurally amiss—merely a little matter of nerves, dear lady, merely a matter of nerves!"

"I am sure you are right. It is only nerves with me," acquiesced Mrs. Munroe, "for sometimes there is not a trace of a stammer in my speech, while at other times I am a nuisance to myself and everybody——"

"Not to other people, dear lady, I am very positive. The slight impediment with which it has pleased a not-always-wise Providence to afflict you is, if I may say so, a charm, but one nevertheless that I am able to remove if you will place yourself in my hands."

Mr. Vert Glandyss smiled in a way that for want of a better word may be termed "largely;" he smiled as might some perfectly respectable heathen deity who condescended for the moment to attend to the needs of humanity—for a consideration.

"Charming man!" the lady mentally ejaculated. "You really can cure me?" she exclaimed, aloud. "Oh, how delightful!"

"Nothing easier. One hour, three or four times a week, spent in the hypnotic trance, during which times you will read aloud to me, will in the

course of a month or so completely rearrange your nervous organization. Naturally, you will be unconscious during the lesson, if I can so style it, but that will in itself form part of the cure. There can be no nervousness while in a state of insensibility. You will read without the smallest trace of stammering; in fact, though your tongue will be busy, the brain will be in absolute repose."

"I understand," said Mrs. Munroe, nodding. "Do go on; it is most interesting."

"In the course of time," resumed the High-priest of Hypnotism, with a seraphic smile, "Nature will adapt herself to the new order of things, and will be obliged to engraft on herself the habit thus learned. The complete immunity from hesitation taught her during your periods of enforced mental repose will become part of herself, and—you will be cured. In fact, without a palpable effort on your part you will be quite incapable of stammering."

Mr. Vert Glandyss had warmed up to his subject. He foresaw many guineas.

"Delightful!—quite delightful!" murmured Mrs. Munroe; "and when may I begin?"

The great man sighed musically, and took an engagement book from his pocket.

"The season," he said, while scanning its pages, "promises to be a busy one, but I think I can find you a spare hour now and again."

Mrs. Munroe waited in trepidation, lest the ease of speech so nearly within her grasp should be snatched from her by jealous Time.

"Let me see," he murmured to himself; "on Fridays, the Duchess of Strattonbourne—three to four-thirty. The Princess on Mondays, ten to half-past—h'm—h'm—and the dear Countess is so dreadfully unpunctual that it is difficult to arrange—ah, yes, here we are! I can spare you an hour four times a week, say, shall we, from six to seven in the afternoons? Would such an hour suit you?"

"Perfectly—I shall make it suit!"

replied the lady, vehemently. "I am all anxiety to begin the cure. Is it very terrible, Mr. Glandyss?—I mean the fact of becoming unconscious." She felt herself grow a little pale from excited anticipation.

Mr. Vert Glandyss spread out his hands in amused deprecation and smiled a smile calculated to cast out fear from the most timorous of hearts.

"You have seen for yourself, dear lady, how simple it is. A little disk of metal to gaze at—a pass of my hands—so!—and heigh presto! you are gone! Each successive time it becomes easier for me to put you into the hypnotic trance, and eventually, when I have you under perfect control, a look from me will almost suffice to send you to sleep. A fact, I do assure you," he added, suavely, in answer to an astonished and somewhat nervous glance from his patient. "You are lulled into a delicious sleep, knowing nothing of the worries and vexations of life, and all the time you are being cured of what I personally—" he bowed with the grace of a fashionable bishop—"regard as a very charming and becoming ailment."

"But—you won't go sending me off to sleep when I don't want to go?—at any place we may happen to meet? It might be so awkward——"

"Dear lady!" Mr. Vert Glandyss was inexpressibly shocked, and showed his wounded feelings. "Dear lady, does not a doctor reserve his treatment for the privacy that it demands? I—I—really, I am quite horrified at your suggestion!"

"Oh, please forgive me!" cried Mrs. Hallam Munroe. "I quite forgot that I shall have to consider you as my doctor! How perfectly delightful it will be to be put to sleep like that! But—" her face fell a little—"will three months be long enough for the cure?"

"Doubtless we shall meet somewhere after the season is over—a rest for a few weeks will not affect the treatment. I shall be going abroad the middle of July, and I intend making Monte Carlo my headquarters

during the Winter months. One meets everybody there, and perhaps my séances may prove a relaxation to the hard workers who spend their time at the tables."

"That will be charming. I always go there after Christmas."

"Do you play?—if it is not rude to inquire."

"Never!" returned Mrs. Munroe, emphatically, "but I enjoy looking at the fools losing their money."

"By far the wiser form of amusement," he returned, with a quiet laugh.

"Then, Mr. Glandyss, suppose I am not quite cured by the end of the season, we can resume our séances among the flowers of the sunny South."

"Quite so, Mrs. Munroe. In the meantime," he glanced hurriedly at the clock, "you will excuse me? I am due at Marlborough House—I am to expect you then to-morrow—to-morrow at six?"

"You may. I am a dreadfully punctual person, Mr. Glandyss, and I will be here at the moment!"

"I shall be charmed," he murmured, showing her to the door and ringing for the negro boy who acted as buttons.

"The luckiest stroke of business I have done so far!" he observed to himself, as the door closed behind her. "That was a neat shot about Monte Carlo!"

And Mr. Vert Glandyss smiled again.

Colonel Whitelaw remonstrated at the last craze of the pretty widow. In vain he pleaded that he had been the bosom friend of her husband, and that he was positive that were Munroe alive he would dislike the idea of his wife putting herself into the power of a man who as likely as not was a charlatan. Mrs. Munroe shrugged her shapely shoulders.

The Colonel declared that he had known her from babyhood, had nursed her on his knee, and hated to see her taking up with all these new-fangled notions, mesmerism, hypnotism—it was painful to him, painful.

"My dear Colonel," she replied, "you are only ten years older than myself, and I must say that if you were fond of nursing me when I was in long clothes, you showed an extraordinary taste as a boy."

He pleaded for greater caution—for the respect due to that ancient dame, Mrs. Grundy.

"Good gracious me! I am not a child, my dear old friend. We Canadians are more independent than these people who have lived all their lives in this ridiculous little island. If Mrs. Grundy doesn't like what I do, she may—well, she may occupy herself with looking after people who *do* care what she thinks. I *don't*—one little scrap. Besides, how in heaven's name is this Mr. Glandyss to obtain a power for evil over me? I go to him as I would to any medical man, or to my masseuse. He is well known, and perfectly respectable. You notice for yourself how much more free I get every week from that detestable stammer. Why, only last night I gave that vulgar Grand Duke as smart a slap as he has ever had in his life. It came out as pat as—as pat as anything. I never even hesitated. No, my dear Colonel, I shall continue to visit Mr. Vert Glandyss four times a week until the end of the season. Then, if you are good, you may come with me—and my companion, Miss Tomkins—for our proposed yachting trip to the Azores. We will leave this dirty London behind us and dream away five months on the dear old sea, going wherever our sweet wills take us, and winding up on the Riviera somewhere about Christmas-time. The yacht is there at Southampton, eating her head off, and here are we, going through this absurd treadmill of a season. I long to be away. Five months of doing absolutely nothing! You may come, my dear Colonel, if you are not bored."

"Bored! dear Miriam!"

"Yes, yes, I know. Don't be silly!" she exclaimed, snatching away her hand from his. "Ah, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, dear old friend—" for she noticed that a look of pain

crossed the man's face—"but *really*, you must not make love to me—think of Mrs. Grundy—and you know—you must see—that I am happy as I am. I simply love my independence."

The Colonel sighed.

"I know you do," he said, looking at her with a faithful, dog-like expression in his dark eyes; "I know you do—and I abhor it!"

II

THE *croupiers* of Monte Carlo Casino had become accustomed to the sight of a woman player who night after night, during the dinner hour, when the rooms were comparatively empty, sat stolidly at one of the tables playing heavily. Behind her stood a tall man who from time to time whispered to her, and she in obedience laid progressive stakes on certain numbers, red or black.

The *croupiers* are used to strange sights, and after a few evenings ceased to pay attention to the woman or her companion, only shrugging their shoulders when large sums were paid over to her, knowing very well from weary experience that the system on which she worked would sooner or later break down, and the money flow back into the coffers of the paternal Administration. They did not see the nightly epilogue that was played in the hotel at which the silent and seemingly unconscious gambler was stopping.

Could they have been present they would have seen that the notes won were handed over to the man, and the player, after having a book placed in her hands, was awakened from the hypnotic trance in which she had been plunged for the last hour or so.

Mrs. Munroe was absolutely unconscious that she had left the room, imagining her time of oblivion to have been occupied in reading aloud to her mentor, thus completing the cure of her nervous complaint. Only Mr. Vert Glandyss, gently touching his pocketbook, knew the secret of those hours. He knew also that Colo-

nel Whitelaw was expected shortly to arrive from London, and that that event would terminate his scheme—successful though it had been. However, the little comedy, as he termed it, had proved even more remunerative than he had dared to hope in his most roseate dreams. He had all a gambler's superstitious belief in the infallibility of the hypnotized player, and he had the advantage of his victim's capital while risking none of his winnings. His influence over Mrs. Munroe was complete—in her state of trance she did and said whatever his will dictated.

"Another week of this—if that infernal Colonel doesn't turn up—will see me a rich man; and then for America—and safety!" He turned to Mrs. Munroe as he was leaving her private salon. "You will have a lesson to-morrow, dear lady?"

"Of course," was the reply. "My dear Mr. Glandyss, you have done me a world of good—my nerves are in splendid condition."

He bowed with the suave elegance of a gratified archangel.

"Dear lady, I'm more than satisfied, believe me. And," he mentally added, "so is my banker!"

Colonel Whitelaw arrived late one afternoon by the Paris express, and after seeing his baggage duly deposited at his hotel strolled down to the Casino, with a few louis in his pocket, just to see "what was doing at the tables." He was no gambler, but, with the rest of the world, liked his little fling, and as he had ample means there could be no objection to his taking it.

He knew that he would probably meet Mrs. Munroe later during the evening, but he preferred the quiet dinner hour for his own little game, as the tables were then approachable with some degree of comfort.

The Colonel walked straight through the first two rooms, looking neither to the right nor the left, into the large *salle* devoted to *trente et quarante*, his favorite game. Here he found what is locally termed a "good card" in

progress, and taking a seat at the table, produced his little pile of louis and devoted himself for the next half-hour to the fascinating personal interest in the fluctuating vagaries of the cards. At the end of that time he had taken the keen edge off his appetite, and got up, the richer for a few hundred francs.

"Enough is as good as a feast!" he exclaimed; "now I will see what the other tables are about."

He had been somewhat disturbed while playing by a group of three men standing behind his chair, who never stopped whispering among themselves. They were not players, and their conversation was on matters foreign to the game. This in itself rather amazed the Colonel, for it is unusual to hear anything but gambling, the idiotic behavior of the cards, or the strange recurrence of certain numbers discussed in the "Paradis du Diable." Though far from wishing to play the part of eavesdropper, the Colonel had been unable to avoid catching fragments of sentences, as in their earnestness the men sometimes spoke above a whisper.

"Safe?" said one, "why not? This job is best done when there are fewest people about. We don't want a row, and the Administration won't thank us for making a scandal."

"Why not put it off," exclaimed another, "till he is outside?"

"No, no," the first speaker objected; "he will be more on his guard then and give us much more trouble. Now he is absorbed in his game—why, the whole thing won't take more than ten seconds—"

"You have the signed warrant?" said the third man, who till then had not spoken.

"Trust me!" was the answer; "that is right enough—and there is no doubt about the man."

"No," laughed the other; "Ivan Klavavitch's face is not so easily forgotten. I owe him a grudge. He nearly did for me on the night he escaped from the prison at Moscow, and I have waited long enough to

pay it back. The Third Section will be glad to get their fingers on him again—he is a firebrand."

"He is doing the heavy swell down here," said the first speaker, "and seems to have got hold of some Englishwoman to do his gambling for him. I believe he has mesmerized her or something; she looks as if she were asleep all the time."

Colonel Whitelaw looked round—he was just leaving the table—and met the eyes of the man who had spoken. In spite of his good French he was evidently a Russian, and had a typical Tartar face, with beady eyes and thick lips. Probably, the Colonel mused, a detective after some poor devil of a suspect or political refugee.

He walked slowly into the next room and stood beside one of the roulette tables. Almost without thinking he threw a gold piece on one of the numbers. The wheel spun round, the marble dropped, and the Colonel was twenty francs the poorer.

"Idiotic game!" he swore, under his breath; "how on earth people can play it beats me!"

He cast a hasty look at the clock.

"Half-past seven, by Jove! Time for dinner."

He turned to go down the long suite of rooms when a sudden babel of voices, the sound of a scuffle and a woman's scream reached him.

The disturbance, whatever it was, came from the long, central room. As usual, there was a rush of people from the various tables—a suicide? somebody shot? some number turned up for the fifth time in succession?—these are the common causes of excitement that draw intent players from their various seats.

Colonel Whitelaw ran with the rest—he was young enough to appreciate "a scene." The crowd was surging round the left-hand table near the windows that look out on the terrace. The Colonel was in time to see a man struggling in the hands of three or four others—a tall, dark man whose face seemed some-

how familiar to him. He threw off his captors—the Colonel recognized them as the men who had stood behind his chair—and sprang back against the wall, panting for breath. He fumbled for a moment in his pocket—like lightning a bottle was at his lips—his arms were flung up into the air, his fingers clutching at nothing convulsively—and before the amazed officers could seize him, he fell face downward on the parquet floor, a shriek of agony ringing through the hot air.

Instantly the crowd was pushed backward by the blue-coated officials, and a circle formed round the prostrate man.

The Colonel noticed that the *croupiers* were vigilantly guarding, revolvers in hand, the pile of money beside them. This might be a ruse, for all they knew, to allow a rush to be made on this particular table, for the purpose of plundering it of its load of shining gold and silver.

His eyes moved down the line of players who, with startled faces, were standing in their places trying to peer over the shoulders of the servants that kept the space clear round the man on the floor. There was one woman who was not standing up, the Colonel noticed. He looked again at her face, and yet again. Great God! was he mad? The staring eyes, into which a semi-consciousness was stealing—the hands that were beginning to move uneasily among the scattered notes and gold . . .

"Miriam!" he exclaimed, springing forward to her side.

It was Mrs. Hallam Munroe.

She gave no reply but looked at him from across the table with a dull glare—the hypnotic trance was passing, for the controller of her will, the man who held the reins of her personality, was lying dead a few paces behind her, and a searching odor of almonds filled the air.

Colonel Whitelaw ran round the table with the agility of a boy and leaned over the figure of the woman he loved.

"Miriam!" he cried again, "come away—for God's sake come away!"

His voice and touch brought the resurrection of her consciousness—with a flash memory and reason came back to her.

"What am I doing here? Where am I? My book——"

She looked round wildly, and Colonel Whitelaw thought for a moment she was going to faint. But Mrs. Munroe had not an hysterical nature, and held a firm grip over herself.

She looked round at the Colonel, read something of the truth in his eyes, and her brain grasped quickly the meaning of her position. She rose to her feet and looked over the heads of the silent crowd behind her.

"Who is that man?" she demanded, in a shrill voice, of the nearest official.

One of the detectives who had arrested Mr. Vert Glandyss, for it was he lying on the floor, replied:

"He is a man who has been wanted for the past two years—an escaped political prisoner, the biggest scamp in Europe, madame! I must take your name, if you please, for you were seen constantly with the deceased——"

"He is dead?" she asked, in a hushed voice.

There was no need for reply—the white face of the man on the floor told its own tale.

The empty bottle of prussic acid had rolled almost to her feet.

The Colonel interfered.

"Here is my card," he said, authoritatively; "I am a friend of this lady, and can be found at the Hôtel de Paris. I will answer any necessary questions. Come, Miriam!"

He took her arm firmly and led her from the rooms.

Not a word did they speak until they found themselves on the terrace. It was flooded with moonlight, and the scent of the roses made the air heavy.

"It is horrible—horrible!" she murmured at last, as the Colonel placed

her gently on one of the seats half-hidden beneath a swaying palm; "it is horrible to think that that man could make me do whatever he pleased—could have me so utterly in his power! horrible!"

The Colonel made no reply, but his lips were trembling ominously.

"But for you, my dear old friend," she went on, "I should be— God knows!" she broke out, sharply,

"what would have become of me! I am most unspeakably thankful that you have come back to me—I can't do without you——"

The Colonel's face lighted up, his keen, dark eyes flashed a sudden passion into those that met his own.

"May I stay — *always*, Miriam?" he said, in a low voice.

Her hand closed gently on his, and her eyes gave the answer he wished.



HIS HIGH OPINION

THE play a poor man must amuse
And give to him a joy complete;
Of course he has exalted views
Who occupies a gallery seat.



FAITHFUL

I SHALL be with you always, though no more
Our hands may meet, yet o'er dividing seas
My love shall e'er attend you. On my knees,
In the deep silence of the night, before
I dare to think of sleep, I shall say o'er
Your name, itself a prayer, and if God please,
When I have drunken of life's bitterest lees
I shall be with you, happy as of yore.

I shall be with you always; even when
The wider sea of death lies dark between,
My soul will seek you like a weary dove
Until it rest in your soul's arms again.
From the bright glow of heaven I should lean
Toward the dearer heaven of your love.

ETTA WALLACE MILLER.



LOCATED AT LAST

BROWN—That Jones boy has his father's honesty.
MATHERS (*who has had some dealings with Jones*)—Well, I knew somebody had it.

THE THIRD FELICIA

By Olivia Howard Dunbar

WHEN "The Flirtations of Felicia" was put on at a Broadway theatre in the early Autumn it met with a tumultuous success. Nor was the demonstration unexpected, since certainty rather than experiment had directed this staging of a book which two years before had been the "novel of the year;" which month after month had stood serenely first in those lists of the "six best-selling books" that are supposed to represent the literary preferences of all the national culture centres; and which in an absurdly short time had transformed Bentley Purrington, its author, from a promising amateur into a celebrity.

Six months after the first announcement of "The Flirtations of Felicia," by a "new author," its astounding number of editions had roused in Purrington, who suffered from an exaggerated nicety of taste, a feeling not unlike repulsion. To stand pre-eminent in favor at the circulating libraries, to be quoted, pictured, gossiped about in every penny sheet—why, it was almost vulgar, this too generous popularity; yet, in his saner moments, he could taste an ironical pleasure in the reflection that this particular fate should have befallen *him*, who of all others least desired it; who had cultivated, elaborately, the exquisiteness, the preciousness, that he had dreamed might one day appeal to the few.

Inevitably, as its quality came to be immoderately lauded, it was brought to the attention of the arbiter of half the theatres in New York that "The Flirtations of Felicia" must be dramatized. When, perfunctorily, its

author was consulted, Purrington declared that he would himself undertake the task.

"By all means," agreed the manager, blandly. "We must have your coöperation, of course; and with the aid of an experienced playwright——"

"I shall have to do without the experienced playwright," was the novelist's rather stubborn attitude. He was still young enough to enjoy the sensation of having his own way. "My book was not a haphazard affair," he explained. "And—oh, well, I suppose it's a matter of artistic conscience with me. You'll understand, my dear sir, at all events, how I could not have the story rehandled by someone else, however expert."

The manager may not have understood, but he prudently yielded. And so it came about that the play, like the novel, was Purrington's handiwork in toto.

How affectionately personal, after all, was his interest in the book that had become popular in spite of his best efforts, was evident from his jealous regard for its dramatization. Accordingly it was not surprising when, on that electrical first night, the author, who sat in one of the lower boxes—short, small-featured, pale-haired, nervous to the point of agony—was dragged forward for a "speech," he could only extol Miss Marchison's performance as *Felicia*, and then broke down altogether! The portrayal of the part had quite overcome him.

It may as well be admitted that there was something—that there was everything—in this character of *Felicia* to disintegrate emotionally the

least emotional of men. The book, and the play, too, for that matter, were admirably constructed, distinguished by a rare knowledge of men and women and by a mingling of sentiment and humor, of the serious and the fantastic, that could not fail to charm. It might be classified as a comedy of manners, and it abounded in dialogue that the critics called "sprightly."

Yet with all its excellences its success was due to *Felicia*. The book, indeed, *was Felicia*—or, at least, was but the mirror wherein her graces stood reflected; was but the delicate medium through which she moved and spoke. And *Felicia* was unquestionably the most charming heroine of her time. True, there stands written against her that one terrific arraignment that *Felicia* was a flirt! Yet we have Bentley Purrington's authority for it that in the community where she lived a flirtation with *Felicia* was held the most desirable, the most educating experience to which a youth could be subjected, inasmuch as *Felicia* never flirted with anybody save to improve him! And she flirted, as you will remember, with dozens.

Miss Marchison, to whom had fallen the distinction of first impersonating the already famous heroine, had been at the head of a stock company for several years. She had a washed-out coloring, a certain ladylike charm and a considerable repertoire of pretty mannerisms. There had been no doubt in the manager's mind that she was signally the woman to play *Felicia*, and, indeed, she played the part in such a manner as seriously to affect the author himself. Moreover, the actress's personal following was sufficient to make crowded houses doubly assured. Not only was there a general desire to see Miss Marchison as *Felicia*, but an inclination almost as pronounced to see *Felicia* as Miss Marchison.

Among the many who, thus drawn, went to the theatre again and again was Bentley Purrington. He felt slightly ashamed, not of his attend-

ance, but of its publicity, and each night retreated further toward the back of the house. But it was a long while before it occurred to him—you will see that he lacked social initiative—that since Miss Marchison so unflinchingly enchanted him as *Felicia*, she must possess a certain interest as—Miss Marchison; and it was then that, suppressing his habitual intolerance of social contact with actresses, Purrington called on the woman he had come to think of as *Felicia*. He even, in a solemn, elderly, superior way, set to work to cultivate her acquaintance. He really did not know how otherwise to minister to his insatiable longing to see, to talk with, to feel the delicious nearness of the novel's heroine, of whom he had become so unreasonably enamored. Sometimes he apologized to himself in much this fashion.

Miss Marchison, who was accustomed to all the adulation that she cared for, did not understand the extent of the novelist's condescension. But she accepted his attentions gracefully enough, and he found, to his very considerable relief, that she wore no diamonds, used no slang, and was not in the least autobiographical. She was, in fact, a fairly cultivated and amiable girl, who proved quite enchanted with Purrington's careless witticisms. She did not, it is true, quote from his books with the frequency or the aptness of many women he had lately fallen into the way of meeting, but Purrington decided after a while that he thought the more of her for this. And in a month or two their engagement was announced.

If popular interest in the play had begun to flag, which was not, however, the case, this circumstance would have revived it. Private and public congratulation came on them in an avalanche. To Miss Marchison this excess of attention did not appear distasteful. At all events, she received it very sweetly. But Purrington, although he strove very bravely to be gracious, resented having to pose as the hero of what the news-

papers called a "romance," even more bitterly than he detested seeing "The Flirtations of Felicia" stacked on the floors of department stores and patronized by chatty saleswomen. Nature had not fitted him, it was plain, to play the part destiny had thus suddenly thrust on him.

In February, before the wedding day was set, the play's success had justified the sending on the road of half a dozen subordinate companies. One of these, the "Original Flirtations of Felicia Company," Florence Marchison was appointed to lead.

"Will you come with us to Philadelphia?" she questioned, rather timidly.

"If I can get away," promised Purrington; "but I've just contracted to write a new novel—by a certain time," he explained, vaguely. And he did not go.

In Philadelphia they "interviewed" Miss Marchison on the subject of her engagement and her distinguished fiancé, and in her gentle, ingénue fashion she praised Purrington intemperately. In Boston they found her rather more guarded. By the time she reached Chicago nobody could drag a word from her. It leaked out shortly that the engagement was broken. And to the hero-worshippers at large the most distressing, the most inexplicable feature of this sad affair was that Purrington was known to have taken the initiative.

Purrington had not been in love very often or very hard. His enemies—for he had them—declared him an inordinate egoist, and thereby immune. His friends were beginning to believe him one of those rare souls that never find their human complements, and prophesied regretfully that he would never "settle down." They glossed over the Marchison affair, which was not of a sort calculated to add heroic lustre to the young man's reputation, on the ground of the actress's intellectual deficiencies. "Poor old Bentley," they said, extenuating him; and thanked heaven that he had, in thus disen-

tangling himself, missed—it seemed by a hair's breadth—the marring of his career. Some there were fatuous enough to pity him openly for having suffered the experience of disillusionment. Bentley was but a child, they said, an unworldly chap, with ideals left over from a too-sheltered adolescence. And it was these who spoke caressingly of the consolation he found in Mrs. Brent.

Mrs. Brent was Miss Marchison's successor in "The Flirtations of Felicia." Her reputation had been made in London through certain over-sophisticated rôles she had "created" in the end-of-the-century plays of a few seasons back, and it was but a few weeks previously that she had permitted herself to be imported to New York, with considerable flourish of advertisement, as the manager's newest "leading lady."

Purrington was present at the first rehearsal. He saw a woman tall, plump with the plumpness that comes after thirty, with an emphatic English profile and a generously brilliant smile. Either because Mrs. Brent had the power her managers claimed for her, or because the subtler magnetism of *Felicia* abided with him, Purrington was conscious of a distinct thrill as she read her lines. He tried to reason about it as he walked home that night.

"Why should a fellow be such a confounded ass as not to be able to get away from his own book?" he asked himself, in all sincerity. "And, after all, did I write it—or another man? At all events, I couldn't write another."

And he spoke the truth. There could be no parallel to his first great success. And meanwhile it was no exaggeration, as he reminded himself in his more candid moments, that all he was or had or hoped for, so far as worldly recognition goes, he owed to the disembodied charm that he had named *Felicia* and that the world had been so prompt to love.

Although the very intensity of his infatuation for the character itself made him blinder than others to the

manner of its interpretation, Purrington could see plainly enough that in playing *Felicia* Mrs. Brent was too unsympathetically the woman of the world, as Miss Marchison had been too persistently the ingénue. Yet the sprightlier passages the new *Felicia* interpreted with a singularly delightful archness, and her deep, full voice lent a strength to the soberer scenes that stirred and gratified Purrington.

Would it not be worth while, he wondered, to know her? So, tentatively, he called on Mrs. Brent. Reassured, he took her to dinner. Definitely committed, they went driving every morning of the following week.

In the interval that followed *Felicia* came perilously near being forgotten altogether. In all his life Purrington was perhaps never so distracted from literature and from himself as during this short and strangely absorbing period. That it came to so abrupt a close amazed those who knew the actress, even more than it did the friends of the novelist, inasmuch as Angela Brent was known to have a singular talent for matrimony, and as Purrington was in such matters dangerously immature. The truth was, however, that where Purrington had sentiment—of that most difficult, impersonal sort—Angela had ambition, and she was by no means sure of the success of Bentley's second book. So when a certain illuminating hour showed him that Angela never had been, never could be *Felicia* to him, and the glow faded from his eyes swiftly as the sunset from the darkening sky, she coolly, wisely permitted their acquaintance to end then and there.

Purrington worked hard all Summer on his new novel. It was not an inspired performance. And to his own mind there was something deplorably made-to-order about the heroine. But the good people who regulate the success of the "six best-selling books" never discovered this, and as the first few instalments ap-

peared, to the accompaniment of loud music from the publishers' trumpets, there was no appreciable falling off in Purrington's prestige—or his income.

"You're sure it's safe to put '*Felicia*' on again this Fall?" Purrington inquired anxiously of his friend, the manager. "I couldn't see the thing a failure now, you know."

The manager smiled down from his prosperous eminence.

"My dear boy," he said, "I've been in this business thirty years. '*Felicia*' will run till Spring."

This, as a matter of fact, it did; a fact at least partly due to the bewitching personality of the third *Felicia*, a young woman who, fortunately, corresponded so closely with the original that you who have read the book will require no second-hand description. Indeed, Miss Charlotte Cavendish happened, by a pretty chance, to duplicate *Felicia* to an eyelash. Purrington says of his heroine, you will remember, that:

There was a ripeness, as of Autumn, that warmed and satisfied, in her ruddy chestnut tones, the brown of her firm cheek, the deeper duskiness of her almost too heavy hair. . . .

And again:

When she let her soul float into her eyes, and sat, as she often did, her chin in her palm, her slender neck bent broodingly, she was a very sibyl; yet when it pleased her to tease and mock, when all her dimples flew from hiding, and the laughter never quite absent from her voice broke into music—you saw her for the witch she was. . . .

Here you have an array of phrases, exaggerated, perhaps, that may suggest to you this *Felicia's* exterior, if not her actual magic.

On a humid night in early September Bentley dropped listlessly into the theatre to watch Miss Cavendish's first performance. He had been out of town while the rehearsals were in progress. He would see the first act through, he thought. Yet no sooner did the actress come on the stage than Purrington forgot his weariness, and

for three hours was held by an irresistible witchery.

How piquant she was, how maidenly, how mystifyingly sweet! There indeed stood the *Felicia* he had first conceived, like the sudden exquisite fulfilment of a half-remembered dream. Yet for the first time, too, Purrington was able to forget she was of his own invention. Here was Galatea come to life, and Pygmalion's expectant eyes were dazzled with the lovely spectacle.

In that tenderest, most unmodern of love scenes where *Felicia*, standing among the poppies in the garden, is brought to confess her love for *Philip*, Purrington felt his first throb of dislike for his austere correct hero, his first pang of something he could not name that *Felicia* should prefer such a man.

And in the famous ball scene in the fourth act, where *Felicia* renounces her lover because of her imagined obligations to *Constance*, who loves him, and ten minutes later, for diplomatic purposes of her own, is engaged to the professor whom she does not care a fig for, Purrington, forgetful that the device was of his own conceiving, agonized with his heroine's heartache while he thrilled with delight in her enchantment.

How clumsily theatric Mrs. Brent had been in this difficult scene, how palely inefficient Miss Marchison! Theatrical expedients they had been merely; but here, at last, was the real *Felicia*!—*his* *Felicia*.

The spell thus securely cast abided. And Purrington, defying the popular comment that stung him far more cruelly than the hero-worshippers would have cared to know, made haste to offer Miss Cavendish such adoration as no other woman had ever evoked from the man who, before he fell to waiting about stage doors, had been a notable model of discretion and reserve. Largely because he believed himself genuinely in love for the first time, and partly because he longed fiercely to check the subdued ripple of ridicule that

his dilly-dallying with actresses had given rise to, the never quite disinterested lover bent all his strength to his wooing. Yet, suppliant as he was, he was so astonishingly sure! It would be an overstatement to say that there was a grain of condescension in Purrington's attitude toward the actress. Yet flattery had become his daily diet. He was the centre of his little world. And that his right to the woman he chose to love could be disputed never occurred to him. Had she not been his from the beginning? Could she do other than wait the claiming touch of his master hand? A little difficult and capricious she was, certainly, but would he have had *Felicia* otherwise? So with all the mad egotism of the lover who seeks his bride, the artist who worships his own creation, he rushed blindly on.

And one day he rashly forced the issue. . . . He had not dreamed of an alternative. She had been very charming to him. . . .

It was Purrington's habit, his nature, rather, to suppress emotion. He sat cold, silent, with pale lips and eyes narrowed in pain. He seemed unable to speak for a long time.

Miss Cavendish, very slightly flushed, very slightly nervous, sat watching him curiously.

"I may be quite sure," he said at last, "that you mean this?—that you will not marry me?—that this is not a mere piece of—stage business?"

It was his wounded pride that spoke.

"You know better than that," she interrupted him, firmly. "You know me well enough to know why I will not marry you."

"You refuse to marry me," commented Purrington, bitterly, "and then set me guessing why! You would dig your little heel into a man's heart, and—"

"But you're not heartbroken," she said. "You're angry because you cannot make me love you. Now think for a moment. You've not even paid me the compliment of falling in love with *me*!"

Purrington stared.

"You demand stage love-making?" he said, still sullen. "I am no actor."

"I demand single-heartedness."

Miss Cavendish rose and crossed over to a seat nearer Purrington.

"My dear boy," she said, "is it possible you don't know you're in love with—*Felicia*? I cannot blame you. A right-minded man ought to be. And your faithfulness to her!—it's interested me more than anything else I've seen. Unconscious, largely, on your part, of course——"

"No," said Purrington, in a voice suddenly lowered, as if he were mentioning his religion, "not unconscious. I do—love *Felicia*. And I'm willing to confess it, since you are acute enough to read me. But what," he went on, eagerly, "what if I love you because you are like her?"

She shook her head.

"Ah, then it's the woman's jealousy—I thought it an infinity below you," he went on. "Poor *Felicia*! Not an ounce of flesh and blood, yet you are jealous of her!"

"Listen!" she commanded; "you concede, then, that I'm like *Felicia*?"

"Like her? Sometimes I believe you *are* *Felicia*."

"Am I not the—the only *Felicia*?"

"For me—the only one."

"Have I not felt her as you felt her? Was not the part mine because I alone could understand her? Would she ever have been fully realized without me? Well, then, suppose I were *Felicia*?"

"If you were *Felicia*, you would be mine!"

"Should I?"

"Would you not?"

"Why, consider. *Felicia* marries no one, you know. To be sure, there was *Philip*. And perhaps the presumption is— But whatever became of her, you should know. And can you fancy her walking to the altar with—well, with *you*—Bentley Purrington? Would *Felicia* marry a man insanely in love with literature and considerably in love with himself?—a looker-on at love, not a lover?—a

thoroughly delightful companion, of course, but not by any means her equal?"

"Don't spare me," he smiled, grimly. "When a woman turns analyst——"

"Oh, but these are platitudes. I'm sure you agree with me. You know as well as I do that *Felicia* is a far finer order of being than most women—and all men. And then, many a writer succeeds by some such single leap as yours. Most poets, you know, have held their heads above the clouds—have sung their songs there. But as for living in the same sphere with their own creations—why, that's what biographers are for, to tell us how their feet have faltered by the wayside. Can't you realize it's a commonplace that men build better than they know? When you imagined *Felicia*, Bentley, you had your moment of greatness. It's not surprising if the rest is——"

"Mediocrity," said Purrington, slowly. "Oh, you are cruel, but you are right. *Felicia* would never marry me." In a moment he added: "And why, if I may ask, have you reserved those reflections until now? You've been very nice to me, you know. A man might almost have thought——"

"Don't reproach me for that," she said, quickly, "for I liked you very much. And *Felicia* would have done the same, you know. It was you who taught *Felicia* how to flirt!"

"You're well defended. I believe I even maintained that it benefited her victim."

"And has it?"

"It has chastened him. He is grateful."

"But do you thoroughly understand yourself? I understand you. Oh, I've studied——"

"You've been trespassing, then. That's my province."

"But it was for your benefit. And I now offer you the results. I've discovered a man in love with an abstraction. I've told him of it. He, if he chooses, may write about it. It's a wonderful bit of literary economy. Why should you not, Bentley, be the

hero of your next book? Oh, you've been so singularly careful, so singularly discerning. It has reminded me of sleep-walking. I even watched you while you thought you were in love with the other *Felicias*. Do you know why you did not marry either of them?"

He frowned. "Is this profitable?"

"To you, yes. It was because in admitting her willingness to do so, each proved to you that she was not the real *Felicia*! That's where your nice artistic sense saved you. You knew, you see, subconsciously, that the real *Felicia* would have done no such thing."

"I don't know that I even follow my own mental processes, admirably as you describe them. Have I really so complicated a psychology?"

"And then," she went on, smiling half in compassion, half in amusement, "you were more strongly drawn to me because I was more, very much more, *Felicia* than either of them had been. It indicated no vacillation on your part, as people thought. Oh, you were the very pattern of a constant lover all the time. But have you thought, Bentley, how lucky you have been not to get yourself irrevocably entangled? Matrimonially speaking, you bear a charmed life."

"This is all very amusing. But there is no *Felicia*. You, even, are not *Felicia*. And will you marry me?"

"True, I'm not *Felicia*, after all.

But I'm *Felicia* to a sufficient degree to understand the artistic impropriety of marrying you. You see, I'm saving you now where your artistic instinct has saved you before. Oh, you are really very lucky, for you are thoroughly eligible—and I might have married you. But *Felicia's* ghost—what may a literary spectre look like?—would have haunted us always!"

"Are you a casuist convincing me against my will, or a heartless woman turning me out of doors?"

"I'm *Felicia*," she laughed, "paying my respects to my creator."

"You're a flirt, on your own confession. And you've refused to marry me on the only ground I can't contest—that of my own unworthiness! But it may be my own fault. I've followed moral precepts too closely. I wrought a star. That was well. I hitched my wagon to it. That was ill."

"It is interesting," she repeated, "but it's not tragic, because you're not human. Your emotions are not in your heart. They are in your pen point. Even now you are rather taken with the idea I have explained to you. Do we need to discuss it further? I haven't in the least distracted you from your fealty, after all. Continue to woo *Felicia*, my dear boy, as one woos the moon. And jot down in your note book that you have renounced, with good grace——"

"The third *Felicia*!" suggested Purrington, whimsically. And he actually reached for his pencil.



ADVANTAGE IN NUMBERS

CHICAGO BOY—I got more Christmas presents than you!

NEW YORK BOY—Of course you did. You have more papas than I have.



SNAP-SHOT OPINION

NED—Clara says you are a perfect gentleman.

FRED—Why, she doesn't know me!

NED—That's what I told her.

GOOD OLD DOCTOR

OLD Dr. Quack is making money quick;
 All the complaints of man with him agree;
 And oft 'tis said by both the well and sick
 There's none takes life so easily as he.



DEEPLY APPRECIATED

JAGGLES—Why is he so pleased over the Christmas present his wife gave him?
 WAGGLES—It didn't cost much.



MUTUAL BENEFIT

YOUNG WIFE—I am all run down. I think I'll hire a cook, and husband my strength.
 HUSBAND—Yes, do, dear, and strengthen your husband.



DANGEROUS CURIOSITY

LAURA—Yes, you see she told him her father had lost all his wealth, just to test his love for her.
 ADA—And then?
 LAURA—Well, she will know better next time.



READY DEMONSTRATION

“DO you think you can make my daughter happy?” asked Miss Thirty-smith's father, gravely.
 “Why, I have already, haven't I?” replied Spooner. “I've asked her to marry me.”

AN UNCONVENTIONAL EXPERIMENT

By E. P. Neville

“**H**E is a good fellow, but a thought too serious. A trifling indiscretion at a wine party plunged him into the depths of gloom, and convinced him, in the lurid light of the good books of his childhood, that he was already on the road to destruction; a departure into the land of militant atheism saved him from priggishness and from the sublime and crowning selfishness of an attempt to save his own soul. But it is probable that he would jeopardize that soul for the first shadowy ideal that appealed to him.”

Thus one had flippantly written of Gilbert Woodburn in his college days. In main characteristics he had changed but little in the two years that had elapsed since his entry into the larger world. Perhaps the flip-pant friend scarce understood him, for the man of whom he wrote was at all times sincere; he endeavored always to strike at the root of whatever presented itself to him, and seeing, as he thought, the principle involved, attacked or upheld that principle accordingly. The failure that often waited on his efforts was due rather to a misunderstanding of the conventionalities of existence than to the purity and quixotic character of his aims.

In the early days of reform he would probably have perished obscurely for his principles, or have been venerated by after generations as one of the great ones of earth. In the present age, when reformers of any kind are generally regarded as bores, people with whom he came in contact shrugged their shoulders and

gave him up. The purely fanatical world would have none of him; he was too skeptical, and somewhat too refined for their methods. Between the two he could not find a medium, and was, in consequence, left much alone.

It was at this time that he first met Mrs. Berkeley Gage. She was a fair, frail, tender little woman, with just that pathetic droop at the corners of her mouth that belied the vivacity of her blue eyes, and that told of possible hidden sorrow, thrust back into a past that was a closed book to the world. The fact that Mr. Berkeley Gage was a heavy, quiet man, whom no one knew, and with whom his wife was seldom seen, sustained the impression that she was not a happy woman.

Woodburn had seen her several times and had met the glance of the great blue eyes before he was introduced to her. A crowd of men were about her at the time, and after a formal word or two he drew back and watched her—watched the pure, sweet profile and the droop at the corners of the childish, innocent mouth—and wondered about her. The husband happened to be present on that occasion, and Woodburn found himself glancing from one to the other—from the pathetic face of the wife, with its delicate beauty, to the face of the husband, lounging heavily in a doorway, exchanging a word now and then with some charitable man who addressed him.

Presently she was left alone, and glancing toward her, Woodburn saw her eyes steadily regarding him. At the same moment her gloved hand

dropped beside her and slowly drew aside her skirts, leaving a space on the seat she occupied. She looked carelessly across the room immediately, but Woodburn, with a flush on his face, dropped into the seat beside her.

They talked of many things—commonplace, naturally, at first. Soon, however, he was on a favorite topic. It was seldom now that he found anyone who would take the trouble to understand him, and she had the gift of sympathy. An occasional look told his flattered soul that he spoke of things that were, in a sense, new to her, or that he put in a new light. The husband, lounging at the other side of the room, watched them curiously, as if they were two beings in whom he might have some transient interest, and presently lounged away, to be seen no more.

This was the beginning of many meetings—of many conversations. With the dogged object that was ever before him of getting at the principle of things, the man found himself speculating on this new character, with an ever-increasing interest in the tired, innocent face and its possible story; the woman, in reality very tired of all things, and with a feminine avidity for a new sensation, fanned his interest and added zest to his speculations.

He became a frequent visitor to her pretty little house overlooking the river. Berkeley Gage was seldom there—was, indeed, seldom mentioned—and the young man came to believe that the loneliness in which he generally found her was cheered by his presence. For his own part, he was grateful, without acknowledging it to himself, for a tactful sympathy that was a new feature in his life. He saw her once, on a sunny Summer morning, pacing her horse slowly in the Park, with a man on horseback beside her—a man he did not know. Her head was bent, and her fingers were nervously twisting the mane of the animal she rode. The man beside her was speaking earnestly. Woodburn, with a certain hot sensation all over him, cantered past

quickly, without glancing in her direction. But the same afternoon he went again to see her.

She was seated near an open window, in a great, long, cool room. He had no distinct after-recollection of what she wore, save that it was something white and soft, with heavy, old-fashioned lace that fell away from the rounded throat and arms when she stirred, and made her look like some fair child whom nothing worldly had ever touched, and who was but looking out, with those wide, innocent eyes, on life and its possibilities—a little frightened, perchance, at the prospect. She smiled at him with a smile that seemed to tell him that he completed the picture, and there was the droop of the delicate mouth that hinted tantalizingly of all those things of which he longed to know.

"Why did you run away from me this morning?" she said at last.

"Oh! you—you were—were engaged, and I thought—" he began, awkwardly.

She looked round at him for an instant.

"I should have been glad of you," she said, in a low voice. "I quite hoped you would stop."

He did not speak; he scarcely moved.

"He—he was a friend of my husband. I had—had ridden in, with my groom, quite early, and met him. A Mr. Leonard Sutton," she said, slowly. "So many of these people know my husband—business relations, I suppose—and it is part of my wifely duty to be kind to them." She laughed a little bitterly, and the pathetic droop of the mouth was more pronounced than before.

"I had so much to say to you—so many things that I had thought of," he said, presently, "but they are all gone now."

"I like to sit here and watch the river," she said, as if she had not heard him. "It is like life—coming to one relentlessly, and then, without pause, going on again, and we have no knowledge where it goes."

"Do you seek to know?" he asked.

"No, no," she said, quickly. "Only those who look forward can do that. It seems to carry me with it, and the destination is—nowhere."

"Are you so hopeless?"

"In the exact meaning of the word—yes; in its more bitter meaning—no. There can be no real bitterness in what one does not understand. I have never known hope, hence—" she paused for an instant—"I cannot be hopeless, I suppose."

"Poor little woman!" he said, softly. "You speak very bitterly."

"Do I?" She laughed a little. "I scarcely know why. I thought I had forgotten it all—long ago; I thought that my lesson was well learned."

He had left his chair and had dropped into the window seat beside her. She did not appear to notice the action. He said nothing; he only looked at her with a sense of growing nearer to her with every sigh that escaped her lips. She got up abruptly at last and moved across to a table and began delicately touching and arranging some roses in a great bowl there.

"Mr. Woodburn," she said, slowly, "I—I have something to say to you—something that I must say. I—I want you to—to go away."

"To go away!" he said, blankly, looking only at the face that was bent over the roses.

"Yes—to go away. Please—please believe that I ask it for the best of reasons; please believe only that—believe only in me."

He had no experience of these things; foremost always in his mind was the dogged, almost brutal purpose to probe to the root of all matters that presented themselves to his understanding, however delicate they might be. Now there was another feeling, superior to this, a feeling born of the better knowledge he believed this half-hour had given him of her—a feeling of growing power.

"I do not understand," he replied, quietly.

"I—I can tell you—no more," she said, in a low voice. "I regret the folly that tempted me to ask you—

the weakness of a woman who scarce knows what to say, when all the mad voices are calling—calling to her—voices that duty cannot still. Oh! Mr. Woodburn—cannot you—?"

He had risen, and now stood behind her; there was a determination in his strong face; the feeling in his heart was one of pity for this woman, with something of a growing scorn for the conventional things that he must sweep away to reach her. Yet he told himself that he loved her—that there was none other he had ever known who could have roused in him such deep emotions.

"I cannot go away," he said, steadily; "I will not."

"Yes, yes," she said, turning to him and laying her hands on his breast and bowing her head, "I am sure you will. You are a—good man; you are a young man, with all your life before you. My life is fixed—unalterable; leave me to it."

He put his arms about her and drew her nearer to him. "Do you love me?" he asked.

She did not reply, but bowed her fair head on his breast. She knew the man, and knew that there was no answer necessary or possible at this moment.

"We have talked so often, you and I," he went on, slowly, "that you should know something of my creed, if it is a creed—something of my hatred of the false laws of convenience set up by time-serving men to conserve their little rights and comforts. There is a higher law, a better and a freer law, than all the statutes of men. As I hold you now, so, in the years that are coming to us with the river out there, will I hold you. You do not love this man to whom you are tied—"

"No—no—do not let us speak of him."

"I will take you away, out of this life, forever. The world and its shrieking voice are nothing to me—nothing to us."

"Need we—need we go away?" she whispered, without raising her head,

He held her away from him for an instant, in his astonishment, and tried to look into her face.

"You surely would not dream of continuing to live in the house of a man who—" he began, when she checked him with a light hand upon his lips.

"It was only a momentary fear, the fear of a woman who gives up all she calls life, and goes out to something new and strange with a cloud over her—a cloud that seems blacker because she *is* a woman."

"Is there no sunshine?" he asked, reproachfully.

She clung to him, and kissed him, and whispered words he had heard from no woman's lips before; and he was satisfied.

They were in Berlin together some three months later. They had wandered about in romantic places; had defied the whisper of tongues and the shrug of virtuous shoulders; had forgotten the husband, who sought no redress, and who—if report spoke truly—still lounged heavily in fashionable doorways, apparently oblivious of the fact that half his world pitied him and the other half voted him a fool. Matters had not always gone smoothly with the man and the woman who had erased the name of Mrs. Grundy from their visiting list. Mrs. Berkeley Gage still possessed a longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt which not all the romance of her new life could efface, and was jealously alive to the slightest supposed hint of the precarious tenure of her present position. Gilbert Woodburn had a happiness, out and beyond the possession of the woman, in the vindication of a life principle. Dining one evening alone in a restaurant, a hearty voice recalled him from the world of dreams, and glancing up, he recognized a man whose long absence in other lands had been one of the minor sadnesses of his life.

They sat late and talked long. They were on the eve of parting when his friend said, quite suddenly:

"I saw Mrs. Berkeley Gage to-day. Do you know her, Woodburn?"

"Yes, I know her," replied Gilbert, quietly, for there was something in the other's tone that seemed to hold him.

"Ah, so do I!" The man with the bronzed face and gray-streaked beard laughed softly, and his eyes were reminiscent. The other was silent.

"If I wrote of men instead of studying them only, I think I should write the history of a tragedy, Woodburn—a silent tragedy. Of the tragedy of the life of a man who can only be numbered with the might-have-beens—with the blundering failures that cumber God's earth, because a woman smiled on him. Of a man proud and reserved, with an infinite tenderness in him, who took a girl from poverty and misfortune, and warmed her in his bosom, and held her still, long after she had stung him. Of a woman who never knew the worth of the man she wantonly wounded—a woman who sought the only destiny of which she was capable in other men's arms. What the man might have been with one who understood him I can only guess; what he is the world knows—or doesn't know."

"Of whom do you speak?" asked Woodburn, in a low voice.

"Of Berkeley Gage and his wife. How many men have been linked with her! Leonard Sutton——"

"Leonard Sutton!"

"Do you know him? He was but one. Berkeley Gage would never seek a remedy. I heard him say once, 'The fault is mine; I took the child and cannot hold her. But it doesn't matter.' And I suppose it doesn't—nothing matters. Meantime the husband drifts through life, and has given up hoping; the wife stabs him every hour; and the world laughs, and calls him dull and a fool."

How far Gilbert Woodburn walked that night he never knew, but the gray dawn found him pacing the white streets, heedless of everything, with that one despairing cry in his heart, "What have I done?"

CONJUGAL CROSS-EXAMINATION

By Landis Ayr

"JACK, whom do you suppose you would have married had you never met me?"

"Nobody."

"Don't be uncommunicative. Whom do you think?"

"Really, I don't know."

"Well, reflect a moment. What girl held your preference before I came on the tapis?"

"No special one."

"Oh, then you had several strings to your bow?"

"I didn't say that."

"You intimidated it."

"I didn't intend to."

"Probably not. Do you know what I heard yesterday?"

"What did you hear?"

"That you used to be very attentive to Lillian Ashley."

"Who said that?"

"Never mind. Were you?"

"Not consciously."

"I should think you, if anybody, would know."

"So should I."

"Did you call on her often?"

"That depends on what you term 'often.'"

"I presume you took her driving, too."

"Not precisely."

"What do you mean by 'precisely?'"

"She took me."

"Well! She *must* have been anxious."

"I had no horse and she had one."

"Oh! I suppose she did the driving, too."

"Yes."

"How were you occupied meanwhile?"

"What was left for me but to sit still and try to be agreeable? You don't think I read or went to sleep!"

"N—no."

A brief pause.

"Jack!"

"Speak, *mon ange!*"

"Did you ever kiss Lillian Ashley?"

"I don't remember."

"You *don't*? Fancy a man not remembering that! A woman wouldn't forget."

"Well, then, you might ask Miss Ashley."

"The idea! *She* wouldn't tell, of course."

"Then I don't see how you can find out."

"I think you might tell me."

"I don't remember."

"Oh, *I* know better."

"Perhaps you also know whether I did or not."

"I think—I am *certain* you did."

"Why?"

"Because if you hadn't you would have said no, at once."

"How could I say no if I didn't remember?"

"Never mind; we won't argue that any more. I *know* you kissed her. Now, *didn't* you?"

"I don't remember."

"If you will tell me I'll release you from your promise not to smoke."

"Would you tamper with a man's morals? There's a fine for that."

"Well, you'll have to pay it if you report me. Did you kiss her?"

"I cannot tell a lie. No, I never kissed Lillian Ashley. Now, where's the cigar?"

"Oh, I don't believe you! You're laughing."

"Because you look so disappointed. I thought my statement would have an effect to the contrary. Women certainly are——"

"But see here—I've caught you, anyway. First you say——"

"Now you're trying to wriggle out of your contract. Get that cigar, or I shall lose every vestige of faith in your word."

"You haven't told me the truth yet."

"Well, by all the gods of antiquity, how do you know that?"

"Any goose would know——"

"Dearest, I cannot permit you to thus classify yourself."

"You cannot evade the subject by pleasantry; it has passed from the inconsequent point of a kiss to a question of veracity between man and wife."

"It is evident that you will persist until I say I did kiss the girl. Well, I did. Now get the cigar or I'll brand you as——"

"Wait a minute while I impress on

you a precept. If you had replied in the affirmative at once the matter would have been instantly dismissed from my mind. A married man should consider that his wife is convinced of what he would be liable to do under given circumstances."

"The cigar, please."

"Well, since you have at last confessed the truth, here it is."

"Thank you. Now, not to be your debtor for generous counsel, I will confide to you that there is nothing so undermining to a man's sense of honor as a desire to smoke."

"Oh, I don't call it in the least dishonorable for a man to tell his wife anything that has occurred between him and other——"

"Dearest, you wander far afield from my meaning. Have you not decoyed me into three conflicting statements? Now, but one of these can possibly be true."

"Then which am I to believe?"

"My dear, an unbiased choice is your happy privilege."



HIS TASTE UNCERTAIN

"POOH!" said Daisy, scornfully, "the idea of your being afraid of a poor old house-dog! Why, he eats out of my hand."

"I don't doubt it," replied Burroughs, dubiously, "but what I am afraid of is that he might take a notion to eat out of my leg."



FIGURING AHEAD

MARJORIE—Why won't you give me a golf outfit for Christmas, papa?
WISEBOY—Because I'm afraid the next thing you'd want would be a trip to some place down South where you could play the game all Winter.



THE RETORT GALLANT

SHE—Men have no hearts.

HE—Yes, they have; but when they meet you they lose them.